



SECRETARY-GENERAL : DAVID P. PACE - c/o Kamra tal-Periti – The Professional Centre – Sliema Road – Gzira GZR 06 – Malta
tel : + 356 21312888 fax: + 356 21343002 e-mail: mfpb@maltanet.net

Minutes of the 14th General Assembly of the Union of Mediterranean Architects UMAR held in Sliema Malta on the 5th and 6th April 2008.

01.00 Opening of General Assembly

The Assembly commenced at 9.30am on the 5th April with the President Patrice Genet welcoming all delegates and guests and thanking the Maltese Kamra tal-Periti for taking on the responsibility of organising the Assembly at short notice.

02.00 Apologies for absence/Mandated member sections present

The Secretary General David Pace then stated that apologies had been received from Egypt, Greece and Turkey. Also, Vassilis Grigoriadis had sent his apologies. Mandates had been received from Cyprus, Greece and Egypt (which were not represented at the Assembly), France, Malta, Palestine, Morocco and Italy. There were 8 countries present. These were Cyprus, France, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine and Spain. All had paid up their subscriptions except Lebanon and Palestine.

0300 Discussion/Adoption of the Agenda.

The Agenda was adopted as circulated by the Secretary General with the inclusion of presentations by Giancarlo Ius on the UIA Validation of Schools programme, the Order of Architects of Torino on the forthcoming UIA Congress, and Mauro Latini on a proposal for a celebratory assembly in Pescara on item 10. **(GA14/01)**

04.00 Approval of the minutes of the 13th General Assembly held in Catania.

The minutes were approved. **(GA14/02)**

05.00 Report on the Activities of the Executive Bureau

The President began by expressing his regret to the Lebanese Order and Michel Barmaki in particular that despite all their efforts to organise the Assembly in Lebanon, the prevailing political climate had not made this possible. He therefore thanked once again the Maltese Order of Architects and in particular Tony Fenech-Vella and David Pace for responding quickly to host the meeting in Malta.

He then recalled the decisions taken at the Catania Assembly and the events which followed under the three main lines of activity which UMAR had programmed for the 2006-2009 Action Plan, mentioning the SD-MED and SOLARBUILD programmes in particular. The President recalled the memory of Denis Bedeau whom he described as a firm believer in Euro-Mediterranean dynamics. He also spoke on the various invitations he had received to participate in fora dealing with topics which formed part of UMAR's objectives. He emphasised the continuing success of UMAR's Summer Schools.

Patrice Genet then spoke on the current stats of UMAR as a recognised regional body of architects, with a unique identity, as a result of which collaboration was being sought and agreed on with other bodies such as UIA and ACE.

The President concluded his address by addressing some thoughts on the current state of architecture in the Mediterranean and urged UMAR's member architects to seek a positive contribution towards positive sustainable design, respecting the cultural richness and diversity in our region.

06.00- 08.00 Financial report & Presentation of 2007-2008 Budget by the Treasurer

Giorgio Giani presented the report and the budget for 2007-2008. The report showed a bank balance of € 27,216. The Treasurer reminded that this report had been prepared for the Assembly which was to have taken in place in January and all results were compiled up till the end of 2007. After a short discussion it was approved. **(GA14/03)**

09.00 UIA/UMAR Protocol

Michel Barmaki gave a report on the situation to date. The protocol was ready for signing, and was to have been signed in Lebanon but now it was to be signed in Torino during the UIA Congress.

10.00 UIA Congress – Torino / UMAR Assembly in Pescara

Mauro Latini gave a presentation on a proposal to host a celebratory UMAR Assembly in Pescara. UMAR would be celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2009. While the normal General Assembly would be held in Morocco in January if the Moroccan Order's invitation were to be accepted, the Pescara Assembly would be merely a celebratory one. Pescara was to host the Mediterranean Games at that time so there would be an excellent opportunity to visit the Games' installations.

Riccardo Bedrone then gave an overview of the preparations for the UIA Assembly in Torino. A strong participation was expected and a comprehensive programme of activities had been organised not only inside the Congress Centre at the Lingotto, but also around the whole of Torino. This experiment had been successfully carried out during the Winter Olympics when certain ceremonies were held in the city centre, thus bringing the Games into the heart of the city to involve the residents. He hoped that UMAR would participate and that as many member sections would be present.

Giancarlo Ius gave an explanation on some aspects of the running of the Congress, particularly the financial details. The organisers had tried to make the vents as accessible as possible without excessive costs. However this meant having to charge for participation in the exhibition area although each member section would be allocated 16sm of exhibition space free of charge.

Giorgio Giani proposed a programme of participation by UMAR which would include an exhibition, and a Mediterranean Night on the 30th June. Costs were expected to amount to around € 50,000 including commercial expenses. He reminded that since much of UMAR's budget allocation for projects had not been taken up, the funds could be utilised for a publicity campaign for UMAR at the UIA Congress. He added that an international ideas competition for the rehabilitation of the Fortress of Fenestrelle on the border with France was to be launched at the Congress and he hoped that many UMAR members would take part.

Omar Farkhani began by thanking the Kamra tal-Periti for organising the Assembly and expressed his regrets to Lebanon for the unfortunate circumstances which prevented the Assembly from being held there. He expressed himself in favour in principle with the organisation of a Mediterranean Night. He also remarked that with reference to the Treasurer's report, there were still many non-paying countries and this would affect the next Assembly which was an elective one.

Michel Barmaki expressed his regret that Lebanon could not host the Assembly and hoped that this soon would be possible. He remarked that the matter of the surplus finds should have been discussed earlier in a broader picture which would also tackle the matter of the

outstanding subscriptions, as well as the subscriptions themselves. He stated that he would be checking why Lebanon's subscription had not been paid on his re-entry.

Pietro Paolo Mincio thanked Malta for hosting the Assembly and Lebanon for its efforts to do so. The proposal for UMAR's participation in the Congress an outline one. Before speaking about money the discussion should be about the principle. What was being discussed was UMAR's presence not only in the Congress area but in the city for everybody to see. He remarked that the lack of payment of subscriptions was a problem for UMAR. Perhaps the Treasurer could be asked to reduce some expenses in order to achieve a healthy balance.

Tony Fenech Vella stated that he agreed with Pietro Paolo Mincio on the proposal to use surplus funds for publicising UMAR. Once the funds were there they should be utilised. Perhaps not all the funds should be allocated for this purpose but maybe part of them could be used to assist paying member sections to host the Assembly.

Charalambos Tsouris expressed his thanks to Malta for offering to host the Assembly, as well as his regrets to Lebanon for not being able to do so. He stated that too much time was being spent on financial matters. He wished Italy success in running the Congress and expressed the opinion that although UMAR should be present, with the present situation where many members were not paying their dues, this presence should not go beyond a token contribution as far as money was concerned.

Hani Abu Diab commented that what must be discussed should be based on UMAR's best interests, keeping the financial situation in mind. He was in favour of participation in principle since it was important for UMAR to be present.

Omar Farkhani clarified his previous statement in that it was not a question of whether UMAR should or should not attend, since it was obvious that UMAR should register a presence. The real problem was that while the proposed costs were not that large in the circumstances, it was a large amount for UMAR however and not such a large one for Italy.

Philippe Castans thanked Malta for the organisation of the Assembly. He stated that UMAR's participation in the Congress, though important, should be decided after carefully considering all the financial implications.

Patrice Genet informed the Assembly that the E.B. had only been informed yesterday about the participation expenses. It was important to develop UMAR's relations with other organisations, and UMAR would be responding positively to any such invitations. The proposed budget was a provisional one but the amount was one that could be considered as being proportionate to UMAR's financial resources.

Giorgio Giani expressed his disagreement. UMAR did not have an economic programme. It had recovered part of the old debts, it had set out a triennial budget which had been followed. So now it was possible to create activities but there had been no activities which had made use of

the funds available. Countries still were not paying their subscription, so it was useful to spend some of the funds in great event such as the UIA Congress, and exploit it to give new life to UMAR, by publicising its work to many architects who would be present. However if UMAR did not contribute it would not be possible for the Turin Order of Architects to organise it. The proposed budget was a first idea for discussion. He reminded that in Marrakech a budget of €8000 had been presented and approved. Torino could be a showcase for UMAR and the occasion should be exploited.

Patrice Genet remarked that the proposed contribution was beyond UMAR's financial capabilities. The budget needed to be discussed in detail before a decision could be taken.

Giancarlo Ius remarked that all organisations needed initiatives like these. It was important for UMAR to decide in its interest the best way to organise the event.

Charalambos Tsouris reminded that there was a shortfall of €10,000 in UMAR's accounts, and care had to be taken in spending the available funds. For instance, Cyprus would be offering to hold its workshop for free.

Anthony Fenech Vella was of the opinion that the funds had to be spent carefully. For instance for the Summer Workshops, some countries do not participate because of travel costs, so it might be better to find ways of using some of the funds to assist them to take part.

Omar Farkhani agreed with Giancarlo Ius's suggestion that UMAR should seek the best way in its interest to organise the event. There could have been some misunderstanding possibly because some information on finances was only available now. He suggested that Giancarlo Ius's proposal should be taken up and that UMAR should organise the event in the best way it deemed fit.

The Assembly was suspended at 1.00pm for a lunch break.

The Assembly resumed work at 2.30pm.

Continuing on the UIA Assembly Giancarlo Ius mentioned the UIA proposal for validation of schools of architecture put forward by the Oceanic region countries. The proposal would in effect create a structure on two levels. The top level would be the proposed system while the second level would be the system endorsed by the UIA/UNESCO Accord. He proposed that the UMAR Assembly decides that a letter be sent to Gaetan Siew UIA President, asking him to review the proposal, to prevent a split in regions.

Isabelle Moreau reminded the Assembly that previous versions had already been suggested but not approved, and also that the countries promoting this new proposal were in an economic accord.

After further discussion the Assembly decided that a letter should be sent to Gaetan Siew, UIA President, voicing concern about certain points in the proposal, and requesting him not to sign it. The letter was to be copied to all architects' associations. **(GA14/04)**

Giorgio Giani then informed the Assembly that regarding the organisation of the UMAR event for the UIA Congress in Torino, he would leave it up to the Assembly to decide what was best to organise and that in order to leave the Assembly free to deliberate he had decided that it was better that he absented himself. He then left the Assembly. After a discussion the Assembly decided that the Executive Bureau should be delegated the power to negotiate with the Treasurer and the Turin Order of Architects in the best interests of UMAR, in order to ensure a participation in the Turin UIA Congress, keeping in mind UMAR's finances. **(GA14/05)**

11.00 UMAR Projects / Work Groups

(a) Prize for Young Architects

Michel Barmaki presented his report. A copy is to be distributed.

(b) Club UMAR

David Pace reported that Club UMAR was being formed as a group of persons who were interested in UMAR and who wished to participate in certain activities but for some reason or other could not do so through their national section. He regularly received requests from individuals to participate in UMAR's activities and Club UMAR could offer the opportunity for them to do so.

(c) Fortifications

David Pace gave an update on the proposal he had presented at the Catania Assembly. Work had continued to set up the framework which also had a Maltese Ministry involved. Member sections needed to nominate their delegate who would then coordinate the project in their country.

(d) SD-MED

In the absence of the Coordinator Vassilis Grigoriadis David Pace read out the report he had sent.

(e) SOLARBUILD

Again, in the absence of the Coordinator Vassilis Grigoriadis David Pace read out the report he had sent. The programme had been carried out as scheduled with two Conferences, one in Marrakech and one in Athens. The budget had been respected and the programme had been concluded. The information was available for all to make use of.

(f) **Summer Schools**

Patrice Genet read out the report prepared by Vassilis Grigoriadis on the Summer School held in Perpignan, France.

Anthony Fenech Vella commented that it was a pity that this successful summer school was not organized in other member countries. He believed that this was partly due to lack of funding in some countries and he suggested that part of the surplus funds as stated in the Treasurer's report, could be utilized for such purpose to spread the system as widely as possible and permit a greater number of participants.

(g) **North/South Charter**

Omar Farkhani reported on the project. This was to be carried out on a collaboration between Morocco and Spain, two countries which shared the same philosophical ideal on the question of "What do Mediterranean Architectural values mean to each one of us?" Apart from the project itself, there was another project linked to it, which was the creation of School of Mediterranean Architecture. Once the Charter was approved it would form the philosophical basis for the school.

Omar Farkhani then stated that in order to move forward there was the need for:

- (1) The General Assembly to give its approval to continue the work
- (2) The reactions and proposals by members to the fundamental question in a concise half-page statement. This would be followed by a definite proposal within a month after.

A discussion then took place on what could Mediterranean culture be defined as. The Charter was not intended to be a 'best practice' document neither one of professional ethics, but it was to be a conceptual document forming a territorial or regional charter. The document would then serve as a basis for development on other themes.

Patrice Genet wound up the discussion by urging Spain and Morocco to prepare the document for the next Assembly, as it was a project that deserved support from all.

(h)/(i) **EAP20 / FP& Restauromed**

Due to the resignation of Pedro Guilherme, no reports were presented, as he had not sent any information.

(j) **Schools of Architecture**

David Pace read out the report sent by Mamdouh Karim. The Lebanese section proposed that it would be ready to host the work sections connected with education, including the Summer Schools, Schools of Architecture and the exhibition related to it.

(At this point Patrice Genet asked for a suspension of the rules in order to read out the draft letter to be sent to Gaetan Siew, UIA President, and all architects' associations, concerning the signing of the proposed document on the Validation of Schools Programme discussed under item 10. The letter was read out and approved by the Assembly. At this point Giancarlo Ius excused himself and left the Assembly.)

(k) **'Abitare il Mediterraneo' Competition**

Pietro Palo Mincio gave a resume of the first edition of the competition, which had taken place as part of the Catania Assembly. He informed that a CD with the participants' submissions was to be circulated. The next edition was to focus on the Mediterranean square, and it was planned to hold the event every two years. The competition was open for the submission of executed works not fictitious ones. It was acknowledged that it would be difficult to control whether the contestant was an architect or not and whether he/she was enrolled in the Order of his/her country.

Following a discussion, the Assembly approved a grant of €3000 for the project.
(GA14/06)

(l) **Conservation project in Nicosia**

Tsouris Charalambos gave a report on the aims of the project which also involved the participation of students. Although the project was to have UMAR included, this was to be at no cost to UMAR itself.

12.00 Reports by Members Sections

Delegates of Member Sections then gave their country reports which in the case of Cyprus and Spain are attached to these minutes. The other delegates promised to send a copy on their return home.

13.00 Date and place of next Assembly

Omar Farkhani stated that the Moroccan Order of Architects would be pleased to host the next Assembly in Fez on the 13th January together with a Conference on the theme "Architecture and Politics". Mauro Latini then gave a short presentation on the proposal to host a 15th Anniversary commemorative assembly in Pescara in June. This would coincide with the Mediterranean Games being held there and would give the opportunity to UMAR participants to visit the installations. The Assembly decided to accept the invitation from the Moroccan Order to hold the Assembly in Fez on the 13th January in order to conduct UMAR's normal business including the elections of a new Executive Bureau, and also to accept Mauro Latini's invitation for an assembly in Pescara in June to celebrate UMAR's 15th anniversary. **(GA14/07)**

14.00 Miscellaneous

01. Patrice Genet requested delegates to nominate representatives for the post of Heritage Coordinator to replace Pedro Guilherme. Morocco and Michel Barmaki responded positively. The Executive Bureau was to ratify the post at the next meeting.

02. Antonio Rivero asked for the support of UMAR member sections for candidates for UIA elections who came from UMAR member countries.

At 6.30pm Patrice Genet wound up the proceedings by thanking the organisers, translators and all who contributed to the working of the Assembly for the quality of the debates.

The Assembly re-convened on the 4th April at 9.00am with the same countries present. Patrice Genet read out the list of decisions taken by the Assembly the day before. The list was approved and signed by the delegates present. The Assembly closed at 10.00am.

Patrice Genet
President

David Pace
Secretary General