

Hon Darius Mbela

Minister for Lands and Housing, Kenya

On behalf of the Government and the people of Kenya, let me extend a warm welcome to all the international participants in the ACAA seminar.

I feel particularly pleased and satisfied to note that Charles Correa's lecture on "Shaping Our Built Environment" and the seminar that will follow thereafter in Zanzibar is coming immediately after the observance and celebrations marking the World Habitat Day which took place on 3rd of October, 1988. This is yet another vehicle for maintaining the momentum created by the activities of the World Habitat Day that have played a very important role in creating and enhancing awareness of the global human settlements and environment problems, the past development, the constraints encountered so far and the need to take action for the future.

Because of the important role architecture plays in the development of human settlements and environment all over the world, the Aga Khan Award for Architecture's long term pre-occupation with the search for efficient solutions in this area must be congratulated and supported for where there is the will there is hope.

Well-planned human settlements and environment play an important role in enhancing the quality of life of people in both urban and rural areas. They provide security, privacy and protection as well as promoting the health of the people. They are also an important basis for the future agenda for social and economic development.

Despite this recognition of the social and economic importance of human settlement and environment, the situation all over the world and particularly in developing countries leaves a lot to be desired. As a result of rapid population growth and urbanisation, most of the cities in the developing world are now characterised by the mushrooming of unplanned settlements and slums. The rural population where most of the people live is also continuing to grow. This development both in urban and rural areas in turn generates the need for more services such as water supply and

infrastructure as well as community services, the provision of which require the utilisation of our scarce resources.

As architects and planners, this is the challenge ahead. The lessons we have learned over the last two decades during the implementation of our human settlement programmes and projects are too many to recapitulate. We may however mention some of the important ones.

We have observed that many of the obstacles to the provision of shelter are man-made. Left alone, almost the first thing a family does is to put up some kind of roof under which the family can shelter. This is what they do even now in the rural areas and in the unplanned settlements and slums in the urban areas. If they cannot get better and affordable services, it is because of insistence of unnecessarily high standards, lack of access to finance or lack of title deeds to their holdings and non-existent forward planning. Removing these hurdles should therefore be our immediate preoccupation.

While Governments have got an important role to play in establishing the necessary enabling climate for better and efficient planning and implementation of the human settlement and environment programmes, planners and architects should on their part endeavour to understand Government policies and strategies as well as the needs, the culture and the traditions of their clients.

In the search for low-cost affordable options, the best place for architects and planners to start is to have a close, hard look at the traditional architecture, the construction methods and the climate of a country. This should go hand in hand with the *incorporation of local building materials and community participation* in the planning and implementation of the projects. In doing this, due consideration must be given to the management and preservation of our environment in order to ensure future development. This is not a new message but we need to keep on reminding the new and up-coming professionals in this area.

I must emphasise one point that is usually neglected by most of our architects and planners. The success of housing projects depends heavily on the involvement of the beneficiaries

irrespective of their social and economic status. Like the rich people, the low-income earners are just as interested in the kind of house they would wish to build, the materials to be used, and the kind of neighbourhood to live in.

Getting their co-operation involves consulting them at all stages of the project planning and implementation. Only then will they be prepared in turn to accept your advice, and in this way you will be assured of maximising their satisfaction.

We in Kenya consider the development of human settlement and environment to be of great importance. In this connection, my Ministry has started a programme of development of all the slum areas starting with Pumwani and Kibera. This programme will be spread to all the towns where slums and unplanned squatter settlements exist. It will be an additional programme to the already on-going shelter and urban development programme in our main towns such as Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu and the secondary towns such as Kitale, Nakuru, Eldoret, Thika and Nyeri. In these towns, we have a comprehensive housing, infrastructure and community facilities improvement programme that also incorporates employment generating projects. A small town housing programme is also underway covering more than 30 towns spread all over the country. These small towns are important because they provide administration and market facilities for the rural community where the majority of our people live.

In addition to this human settlement development in the urban areas, the Government through the National Housing Corporation has been giving loans to individuals in the rural areas to assist them in the improvement of rural housing. It is the intention of the Government to improve on this rural housing programme in order to benefit as many people as possible. In this connection, my Ministry and the Housing Research and Development Unit of the University of Nairobi has been carrying out research on the utilisation of locally available building materials and construction techniques. We have now moved from the research to the demonstration stage in order to test the applicability of the researched local materials and the results are very positive.

Further to this development, my Ministry is sparing no efforts in accelerating the programme of land survey and issuance of titles. The implementation of the revised housing by-laws will also be accelerated.

It is the intention of the Government to continue streamlining the necessary legal, financial and institutional framework for the development and management of future human settlement and environment programmes. In this connection, the Estate Agents Act and the Sectional Properties Act have already been enacted. His Excellency the President, Honourable Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, has already appointed the National Co-ordinating Committee on Urban Land Use Planning and Development to look into the issues of present and future urban development. The Rural Development Strategy is in full operation and my Ministry is in the process of revising the National Housing Policy for Kenya which will cover both the urban and the rural areas.

In this regard the forthcoming seminar will give us further insight into the development of planning and architecture that is related to an important section of our population. I understand the aim of the AKAA is to make architects and others concerned with the built environment aware of the vitality of Islamic culture while encouraging architecture appropriate to the rapidly evolving context of the twentieth century. I am, therefore, grateful to have the opportunity to participate in this important function and to have the honour to officially welcome the AKAA.

Rueban Mutiso

Vice-President of the African Union of Architects

The environment which we inhabit and the process of living form a totality consisting of non-physical and physical elements. The non-physical elements include the different relationships which comprise the political, social, economic and psychological dimensions of our lives. The physical elements are the natural world, the material basis upon which all aspects of life rest, and the structures and objects which we produce. Man is an integral part of the total environment.

The total environment, physical and non-physical, is the ever-present context for undertaking those tasks concerned with securing material and social welfare for ourselves and our families, as well as pursuing our search for and the celebration of meaning in our lives.

The total environment is experienced as a unitary field. It can have the effect of supporting or inhibiting each human being's efforts to secure material and social welfare; to develop as an autonomous, creative, fulfilled human being; and to contribute to society's collective development. We are thus, at least, partial products of our total environment and live in a reality that is materially and socially produced.

The built environment, of which human settlements are a part, is the primary tangible outcome of our actions within the total environment. As such, the built environment is both a product of the ongoing process of interaction as well as an active influence on that process. The influence of the built environment on man's activities will vary according to particular conditions at a given time. This influence, however, will never be absent.

The built environment in giving tangible form to the total environment may reflect characteristics of it. If the total environment acts restrictively on efforts at human development, then the built environment is likely to be impoverished. If the total environment is supportive of human development then the built environment is likely to have characteristics which indicate social health and economic viability.

Human settlements, as our primary 'habitat', are a vital part of the built environment and are thus the focus of much conscious attention and action. It is of first importance to any society that settlements should show characteristics which indicate social health and economic viability — that they demonstrate opportunities for a good quality of life. There are strong moral, political, social and economic reasons why the achievement of these conditions should be the primary focus of purposive action directed at the formation of settlements.

The professional — educator, planner or architect who is directing action towards the formation of socially healthy and

economically viable settlements is engaged in social practice and is, therefore, constrained to be socially responsible in his actions. In dealing with settlements the most widespread error with the gravest consequences results from a confusion between means and ends; buildings and settlements are means to a fulfilled life and not ends in themselves.

Socially responsible building and settlement formation are likely to occur only when the particular opportunities and constraints of a specific situation are considered in the light of their broad context; ideological, political, economic and social. Actions taken to address these opportunities and problems must be informed by critical theory.

Reuben Mutiso

Vice-President

The Africa Union of Architects

The Africa Union of Architects binds together all architectural professional societies in Africa. There is much to learn in Africa and the rich culture of the people contributes to the product of architecture. There are many similarities in the problems we face and we can learn much from the experience of others. That is one of the reasons why in 1980, the Africa Union of Architects was inaugurated.

The Africa Union of Architects seeks the broadest possible involvement of the public in solving environmental problems in the world. Architecture should be communicated to the people and the people must become well acquainted with architecture and the built environment.

The Africa Union of Architects stands for integration of the cultures of the African people. Architects should take note of the culture of the people in delivering appropriate architecture. Only in this way will there be any relevance in the product.

We are grateful to His Highness The Aga Khan for the unwavering support that he has provided to The Africa Union of Architects and indeed to the entire profession of architecture throughout the world.

The President of The Africa Union of Architects wishes total success to this seminar.

Ambwene Mwakyusa

Secretary General

The Association of Architects of Tanzania

On behalf of The Association of Architects of Tanzania, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome His Highness The Aga Khan, the Representative of The Africa Union of Architects, the invited guests and delegates to this seminar.

We are greatly honoured that our country has been chosen as the venue of this conference.

We are fortunate that our country has a number of buildings which were not constructed by applying modern technology and principles. Apart from depicting the history and tradition

of our societies, there is much to be learned from such buildings, and the preservation of them is of some importance. The Aga Khan has given this endeavour his positive encouragement.

The seminar will be discussing the Architecture of Housing, a theme which is most appropriate at this time. It will touch upon the alarming growth of the population, the need for shelter and the slowness of planning procedures.

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture has selected this precious island as the venue for this seminar. We have here a number of buildings which reflect our traditions and our customs. The Association of Architects of Tanzania is committed to preserving or adapting our heritage to a new socio-economic order rather than destroying it completely.

Our cultural heritage is a most precious asset which cannot be overlooked or discarded as an unimportant part of our lives. Rapidly developing societies like Tanzania and many other countries in Africa are presently going through an identity crisis. The fact is that most architects in emerging African nations have been trained overseas and the foreign styles are thus favoured at the expense of local architecture. The local architectural identity is fast disappearing, and this emphasises the need to retain the valuable history within our heritage.

I wish to express our pleasure in having the Aga Khan Award for Architecture organise a seminar in this country. It is a reinforcement of the Association's objectives. We also thank the Government of Tanzania for supporting this seminar. It is my sincere hope that ideas will emerge which will help us to develop a new and more responsible outlook towards the architecture of housing in this country.