



## UIA STATEMENT

WUF10 / WORLD URBAN FORUM 10 / ABU DHABI / 8-13 FEBRUARY 2020

# “Design is the engine to change our cities—and our future.”

**3 February 2020**— PARIS, FRANCE—For the UN Habitat World Urban Forum 10 (WUF10) in Abu Dhabi, Thomas Vonier, president of the International Union of Architects, prepared this statement:

“Investments in urban infrastructure, architecture and planning are keys to urban regeneration—design points the way to a better future for society and our planet. We need healthy cities, yet all over the world indiscriminate development continues to destroy natural habitat and agricultural land. Relentless reliance on automobiles runs nearly unabated, while many city centres are in disrepair.

“We can—we *must*—build more responsibly, making greater investments in mass transit and public infrastructure. Urban sprawl destroys heritage, wastes resources, and drives socioeconomic imbalances. The world’s 3.2 million architects join with landscape architects, urban planners, and heritage experts to achieve resilient cities, environmental stewardship, cultural protection, and equitable development.

“Everywhere, cities are challenged to provide housing, economic opportunity, clean air, sanitation, and safe drinking water. We know how to take stronger measures against extreme weather. We know how to design for greater security. We know how to encourage walking, cycling, and outdoor recreation—so let us do it.

“Urban design can propel our efforts to protect heritage and halt damage to the global environment. Cities urgently need more effective design and planning policies and new solutions. Architecture can bring better lives to all people.”

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The International Union of Architects (UIA) is a nongovernmental organization based in Paris. Established in 1948, it is the only organization representing the world’s architects, now some 3.2 million in all. The UIA has three basic purposes: to *unify* architects worldwide, to *influence* public policies on building and development, and to *advance* architecture in service to society.

Additional information: [www.uia-architectes.org](http://www.uia-architectes.org)  
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