



TO PRESIDENTS OF UIA MEMBER SECTIONS

Dear Presidents,

6 April 2020

When architects created the UIA in 1948, the world was barely past the worst cataclysm in memory: World War II. The human toll of that war was horrific, and it left many cities and economies in shambles.

In those trying conditions, the UIA's first leaders saw architecture as a great force for social good, able to guide the modern rebuilding of ruined cities toward more just, egalitarian and peaceful communities.

The first honorary president of the UIA, August Perret, led in remaking an entire city devastated by aerial bombing—Le Havre, today a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The UIA was the first international design organisation to call attention to global damage caused by indiscriminate development and the profligate use of natural resources. The UIA's very charter calls for the eradication of slums. It paved the way for UN Habitat and other great institutions working to elevate the human condition.

From its first day, the UIA has been the profession's international force, propelling architects to work in nonpartisan alliance toward a world made better by design. And that is what we need today—first, to help the world fight the deadly pandemic now gripping it, and then to help communities recover and rebuild, applying lessons that will help to avoid future health and environmental catastrophes.

The UIA will continue to be a leading force for good—to begin with, by sharing the best guidance available on building and repurposing facilities for emergency medical use.

Today, just as in 1948, architects must unite in service to society, bringing global perspective and vision. As the profession's international organisation, it is our role to highlight relevant research, promote information sharing and advocate for sound policies. It is in exactly this framework that we will again be coming to you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'THOMAS VONIER', written in a cursive style.

Thomas Vonier
President

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS

UIA GENERAL SECRETARIAT

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