

# **ACCORD ON CO-OPERATION AND PROFESSIONALISM IN ARCHITECTURE**

BETWEEN  
THE ARCHITECTS COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
AND  
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ARCHITECTURAL REGISTRATION BOARDS  
AND  
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE), representing the profession of architecture in the member states of the European Union and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), representing the registration authorities as listed in Annex 1 and The American Institute of Architects (AIA), representing the profession of architecture in the United States of America, hereinafter referred to as the parties, as a result of mutual discussions, signed this Accord on Co-operation and Professionalism in Architecture.

## **PREAMBLE**

The European Union (EU) and the United States of America have decided to develop an Agreement containing criteria, procedures and measures for mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and practice experience that will result in the enrichment of the architectural profession internationally through full portability of qualifications within both political and economic entities.

Mutual Recognition means that an American architect who possesses a professional diploma and is duly licensed by a US jurisdiction shall be recognized as an Architect in any EU Member State, and an architect recognized under the terms of EU Directive EEC 85/384 in any Member State of the European Union shall be recognized as an architect throughout the United States of America.

Once agreement has been reached at the level of the architectural profession, it will be passed on to the trade representatives of the Federal Government of the United States of America and of EU Member States and the Trade Directorate (DG TRADE) of the European Commission. It will only become binding once an agreement has been reached at political level for this Agreement to be included as part of the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) or any future agreement between the relevant political entities.

## **ARTICLE 1.**

The members of the architectural profession within the United States of America and within the European Union are dedicated to the assurance and improvement of standards of professionalism, integrity and competence by facilitating trade in professional architectural services, and thereby bring to society special skills and a profound sense of architectural stewardship essential to the development and protection of the built environment in both political and economic entities while respecting the individual cultural identities.

## **ARTICLE 2.**

*The Architects' Council of Europe, The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards and The American Institute of Architects* affirm the principles of professionalism as follows:

- **Expertise:** Architects that are represented through the signatories possess a systematic body of theory developed through a combination of education, examination and/or experience, so as to assure the public that when an architect is engaged to perform professional services, that architect has met professional standards enabling proper performance of those services. They are charged to maintain and advance their knowledge of the art and science of architecture, to respect the body of architectural accomplishment and to contribute to its growth. Furthermore, in implementing the spirit and the letter of the law governing their professional affairs, members of our respective professional organizations are charged to consider thoughtfully the social and environmental impact of their professional activities.
- **Autonomy:** Architects that are represented through the signatories provide expert advice independent of any self-interest and are charged to uphold the idea that learned and uncompromised professional judgment for the benefit of the client and for society at large should take precedence over any other motive in the pursuit of the art and science of architecture.
- **Commitment:** Architects that are represented through the signatories are mandated to serve their clients and the society at large in a competent, dedicated and professional manner, and to exercise selfless, unbiased judgment on their behalf.
- **Accountability:** Architects that are represented through the signatories accept the responsibility to provide professional services only when they, together with those whom they may engage as consultants, are qualified by the recognized combination of education, examination, training and experience in the specific technical areas involved.

## **ARTICLE 3.**

The parties agree that in the interest of society, the profession of architecture, the environment, culture and the public health, safety and welfare, they will develop, maintain and promote national and state architectural standards for admission to the profession including a combination of:

- Education
- Examination
- Experience.

## **ARTICLE 4.**

The member organizations represented by the signatories are committed to participating in or controlling the establishment of standards for admission to the profession, and standards of ethics and professional conduct, through which members may be disciplined if found guilty of a breach and, therefore, they shall promote systems for:

- Registration/Licensing
- Ethics & Conduct.

## **ARTICLE 5.**

Members of our respective professional organizations commit to maintaining professional standards through life-long continuing education/professional development. The parties agree, therefore, to encourage the development of systems for Continuing Education/Professional Development (CPD).

Now, therefore, on the basis of the above principles, the parties pledge:

**ARTICLE 6**

- To exchange information and resources in social, environmental, cultural and practice affairs related to architecture, including the mutual exchange of students, teachers and professionals, and to promote co-operation in architectural practice between architects of the United States of America and of the European Union, and to improve the public's understanding of architecture through coverage in national and international architectural journals and the exchange of exhibitions.

**ARTICLE 7**

- To negotiate on a bilateral basis the goal of mutual recognition of requirements for practice and licensure/registration, through equivalencies in education, examination and experience, within the earliest appropriate time, so that the markets for architectural services within both the United States of America and the European Union can be opened mutually within the context of the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) or any future agreement between the European Union and the United States. In this context the parties also agree that the basis for statutory licensure/ registration must be protection of public health, safety and welfare and social, architectural, environmental and cultural heritage.

**ARTICLE 8**

In order to attain the goals as set out in Art. 7, the parties agree:

- To have an ongoing exchange of information on education, examination, training procedures for gaining practical experience (internship), licensure/registration, codes of ethics, continuing education/CPD and other information related to the practice of architecture
- To establish a joint drafting panel to develop a proposed Mutual Recognition Agreement pursuant to this Accord. Terms of reference for the joint drafting panel will be developed by the signatories following the signing of this Accord.

**ARTICLE 9**

Negotiations of this document are to be conducted with a view to reaching an MRA within a period of 12 months after signing this agreement.

The signing of this Accord will not necessarily take place on one date in one location. This Accord will become effective when all parties have signed it.

This Accord may be terminated by either party on provision of six months notice in writing, without prejudicing the work of specific projects underway at the time that such notice is issued.

ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE (ACE)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
President-Elect

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary General

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ARCHITECTURAL REGISTRATION BOARDS (NCARB)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Vice President/President-Elect

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Vice President

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS (AIA)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Vice President/President-Elect

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Vice President/Chief Executive Officer