

Unanimous support for Barcelona's candidature as the venue for the UIA Congress and World Capital of Architecture in 2026

- **The Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda, the Generalitat of Catalonia, Barcelona City Council, the Higher Council of the Orders of Architects of Spain and the Architects' Association of Catalonia sign an action protocol to promote the nomination of the city of Barcelona, competing with Beijing.**
- **The designation will take place at the UIA Assembly, which will be held at the end of July in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)**

Barcelona, 28th June 2021. The Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda, the Generalitat of Catalonia, Barcelona City Council, the Higher Council of the Orders of Architects of Spain (CSCAE) and the Official Architects' Association of Catalonia (COAC) have signed today the general protocol of action to promote Barcelona's candidature as the venue for the World Congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) and the UIA-UNESCO World Capital of Architecture in the year 2026. A competition in which they face Beijing and that will be resolved, at the end of July, within the framework of the UIA General Assembly, in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

In the document, the signatory parties recognize the value of architecture and urban planning as key factors to achieve quality of life and a sense of social and cultural belonging, as well as a fundamental part of citizens' right to an urban environment of quality where to develop their life's project. In this way, they show their full support for a candidature that - they agree - can constitute a "great opportunity" to strengthen the role of the city of Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain as centers of production and thought of contemporary architecture and urban design, delving into their capacity to transform and improve people's lives.

The dean of COAC, Assumpció Puig said that "urban planning, architecture and heritage are essential instruments for the social and economic development that must be addressed by cities. Barcelona is known internationally for its urban quality and the level of excellence of its architecture and public spaces". Along these lines, the **president of CSCAE, Lluís Comerón**, has placed emphasis on the role of architects: "At a time of profound changes at all levels, we are increasingly aware that architecture and the quality of the built environment are key to improving our future. The UIA

Congress would allow us to promote and consolidate a space for debate in which the commitment and perspective of architects are decisive."

The **general director of Urban Agenda and Architecture of the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda**, Iñaqüi Carnicero, has highlighted the unity and support of all levels in the Public Administration with the professional associations, in the face of the great opportunity the UIA Congress and the World Capital of Architecture represents for the city of Barcelona: "Union and consensus in Barcelona's candidature. In Barcelona, architects and urban planners will have an ideal setting to reflect and discuss the quality of architecture and the cities of the future, due to their capacity to improve social cohesion, as the well-being and health of people; in the conviction that the city of Barcelona contains all the necessary elements to find unique solutions of great value for our societies."

The **general director of Regional and Urban Planning of the Department of the Vice-Presidency, and of Digital Policies and Territory of the Generalitat**, Agustí Serra, has stated: "*We have a commitment to the quality of architecture, we believe in its public interest, and we know that it is a fundamental instrument to guarantee the well-being of people, as reflected in the recent Architecture Law of Catalonia, which also emphasizes the establishment of measures to promote it.*" "*Urban planning, the urban landscape and architecture give value to the relationship between people and space, generating cohesion, inclusion and sustainability,*" he defended. "*Without a doubt, Barcelona is a global landmark in this case, both for its architectural tradition and for its innovative action in improving urban environments, which constitutes an example for everyone,*" Serra concluded.

Finally, the **second deputy mayor of Barcelona City Council**, Janet Sanz, has remarked: "*Barcelona has consistently been over time, and still is, a landmark in urban planning and architecture: the city that knows how to adapt to new needs.*" For Sanz, this is demonstrated by projects such as the superblocks, streets pacifications and the new green corridors, as well as gender urbanism. "We want to be World Capital of Architecture to show our commitment to this more social, sustainable and healthful architecture and to lead the challenges faced by cities today", she assured.

The UIA congresses have been held since 1948 and, on each occasion, their objective is, from the rigorous knowledge provided by architectural professionals, to address the challenges that society faces. In 1996, Barcelona already hosted the World Congress with the title "Present and Future: Architecture in Cities", with resounding success among the public, and huge international impact. Exactly 30 years later, the celebration of the World Capital of Architecture represents the opportunity to shape a new event of international repercussion, conceived as a space for debate from which concrete proposals will emerge to improve the urban quality of the city and, by extension, the quality of life of its citizens.

In the race towards Barcelona's candidature, on January 25th 2019, City Council expressed, through an institutional declaration, its willingness to present the candidature for the city to become UNESCO's World Capital of Architecture in 2026, a designation that is inextricably linked to the celebration of the UIA World Congress of Architects. As representative of Spain before the International Union of Architects, CSCAE formally submitted the proposal and, from that moment on, Barcelona City Council, COAC and CSCAE worked together to submit the candidacy's application file and its final dossier.

In January 2020, Barcelona was officially named by the UIA as a candidate city with one only rival, the Chinese city of Beijing. Now, the institutions are finalizing the presentation for the candidacy, which will be defended within a month in Rio de Janeiro.