



Intervention of the ACE President Georg Pendl at the CNAPPC Congress, 5 July 2018, Rome

Let me start by thanking the CNAPPC for the invitation. I am honoured and glad to be able to participate and give my contribution to the welcome of the Congress.

I would like to briefly introduce myself. I am a Tyrolean architect and my office is in Innsbruck. I have been President of the Austrian Chamber of Architects and Engineers and currently I have the honour to be in the first year of my Presidency of the Architects' Council of Europe.

ACE is a non-governmental organisation representing over 600,000 architects in Europe. It works with 45 Member-Organisations in 30 European countries, all the EU countries plus Switzerland and Norway. ACE works to represent the European architects' interests *vis à vis* the EU institutions, especially the European Commission and the European Parliament.

Reaching common positions and opinions inside the ACE is therefore fundamental for the ACE to be able to follow its political path. This goal is not always easy to achieve, considering all the differences in the practice of our profession in all the countries.

I have to admit, however, that despite all the differences, we ultimately have the same spirit: our priority is to work for the well-being of architecture and, by extension, for the well-being of all European citizens, which is strongly linked to the beauty of the built environment.

This year in January, the Swiss President gathered all the European Ministries of Culture, together with many Non-governmental organisations, such as the ACE, that I had the honour to represent, to discuss and sign the Davos Declaration for a high quality *Baukultur*. This is the first step towards a common European initiative that aims at putting *Baukultur*, hence architecture, in a prominent position not only for its role in society but also as a driving force for European thought and identity.

Culture, especially *Baukultur*, is a stronger force than economy, which until now has had a central role in the European discourse.

Thus, culture and *Baukultur*, a fundamental part of the European culture, get their recognition in society. I consider this a great political achievement.

Coming to the title of the Congress - so well chosen - "the European City". The European city is the best model in the world in terms of cohabitation of citizens. European cities are the perfect example of long history, vast experience and unique quality.

Since I am now a guest in Italy, of course I have to admit that Italian cities are the most beautiful. But, forgive me for saying that many countries have been able to create beautiful cities of excellent quality. Moreover, the idea of the city itself, is a concept that is shared from the north, where Sami people live, to Sicily and from Romania to Portugal.



The very concept of the city gives us a perfect example of the meaning of the word Baukultur. It involves urban development planning, the concept of traffic, communication, public space, green areas planning. Buildings, planning procedures and the involvement of citizens, are the new challenges for our profession; but they also offer us the possibility to create new alliances and strengthen our response to these challenges.

The concept of Baukultur itself will help us to reinforce the position of our profession in society.