



PRESS RELEASE

URBAN PLANNING ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED AT ISOCARP CONGRESS IN NAIROBI

Nairobi, 23rd September 2010 The 46th ISOCARP Congress, which began on Monday, 20th September at the UN Gigiri complex, was officially closed by His Excellency the Vice President of Kenya at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre.

ISOCARP, the International Society of City and Regional Planners, was holding its 46th Congress and the event, which received critical support from the government of Kenya, brought together 800 architects, engineers, town planners and environment specialists from 50 countries around the world.

The 46th ISOCARP Congress was hosted by the Architectural Association of Kenya (AAK), through its Town Planning Chapter. Among the co-hosts for the Congress were UN-Habitat, whose world headquarters are located in Nairobi and the ministries of Lands, Housing, Nairobi Metropolitan Development, Local Government and the City Council of Nairobi. Other partner ministries include the ministries of Public Works and Tourism.

The theme of the 46th ISOCARP Congress was Sustainable City / Developing World. Delegates explored ideas around the roles of spatial planning and urban design for sustainability; tensions between environmental sustainability, economic efficiency and social equity. They explored in some depth the concept of sustainable cities and the complex dynamics that make sustainable cities achievable.

The delegates identified five big ideas for achieving sustainable cities. These were defined as Integration (at different levels and in a variety of ways); Resilience (not only for post-disaster recovery but also reducing vulnerability and building capability in cities, regardless of disasters); Economic growth (accompanied by employment generation and through optimum resource use with minimal negative environmental impact); a Dialogue with Traditional urban design and built form (to build resilience, ensure efficiency and encourage social cohesion, among others); and finally Flexibility and Adaptability of planning instruments (including legislations, plans, regulations, byelaws and financing instruments).

Some innovations shared at the 46th ISOCARP Congress included energy efficiency and low carbon cities, integrated urban eco-systems, and a sustainable urbanization Score Card, which is actually a good practice presented by representatives of the Ministry of Lands in Kenya.

Delegates did note that for nations to achieve sustainable city development, governments must be willing and committed to the process. Such commitment builds on transparency and encourages participation and partnerships from the urban planning professionals. It is also important to create a dynamic information base for the process and install sound legal and policy frameworks critical for development of sustainable cities.

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ISOCARP



46th ISOCARP Congress | 19 - 23 September 2010 | Nairobi, Kenya

The 46th ISOCARP Congress is the first such Congress to be held in sub-Saharan Africa since ISOCARP was formed in 1965. The Congress theme 'Sustainable Cities Developing World' falls directly in line with the ideals of Kenya's Vision 2030 and is particularly relevant as Kenya's urban population is growing extremely rapidly.

The country's urbanization challenges are evidenced by worsening urban poverty due to high unemployment among urban youth, unregulated urban growth evidenced by informal settlements (slums), shortage of decent low income housing, poor infrastructure and a strained transport system.

However, Kenya has recently enacted a new constitution and the stipulations regarding land, its use and the environment have been clearly outlined in the new document. Renewed investor confidence and a projected economic growth rate of 5.8% per annum have seen increased international focus on the country.

By hosting this Congress, urban planning professionals in Kenya hope to gain global expertise as the country prepares to enforce reforms and regulations in its legal framework. These reforms will include changes in the urban planning sector.

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