Commonwealth Association of Architects Accord
Enhancing Development Effectiveness

First edition

Endorsed by:

The 18th General Assembly of the Commonwealth Association of Architects

Melbourne, Australia

16 and 17th April 2007
CAA Commonwealth Association of Architects

Preamble

We, the member institutes of the Commonwealth Association of Architects, renew our enduring commitment to the values and principles that the People’s Commonwealth share. We endorse the principles of the Coolum Declaration (2002) and its commitment to the rule of law, good governance, respect for diversity and human dignity, opposition to all forms of discrimination, and the promotion of people-centred and sustainable development. Through our activities we will work toward a Commonwealth in tune with the future: an organisation that draws on its history, plays to its strengths, vigorously pursues its members’ common interests and seizes the opportunities open to it to shape a better world for our children.

Accordingly we commit our institutes, on behalf of its members, to:

- Acknowledge that we are part of the global development community;
- Recognise the strategic importance of the Commonwealth community of architects in taking up new and emerging critical issues for the future;
- Take all necessary steps through our professional services to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
- Ensure that through our professional services we support the objectives of Agenda 21;
- Support the New Vision for the Commonwealth;
- Re-affirm our commitment to develop stronger and better-structured links between the official and the non-governmental Commonwealth;
- Practice our professional advocacy role on key issues such as urbanisation and infrastructure delivery; and

Governance

Having regard for the UNDP Principles of Good Governance, and taking cognisance of the nature of construction activities, we shall:

- Perform our undertakings with probity;
- Have clearly stated and enacted corporate values;
- Ensure that processes and information on risks and impacts are directly accessible to those concerned with them; and
- Adopt agreed codes to tackle corruption and persist in the enforcement thereof.

Fighting poverty

The Commonwealth has recognised the need to keep at the forefront of its agenda the attack on poverty. In noting that thirteen of the world’s fastest-growing economies are in the Commonwealth as well as several of the slowest growing ones, and recognising the links between sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty, we shall:

- Ensure that our professional services employed on infrastructure development will deliver value to the communities it serves and to the investors who funded it; and
- Commit our professional practices to the objectives of Better Public Buildings in order to improve public service delivery and quality of life.

Human rights

A key aspect of better democracy is better human rights. Recalling that about one-third of the world’s indigenous peoples are in the Commonwealth, we shall:

- Protect and promote the historical, cultural and social complexities of indigenous peoples;
- Promote cultural diversity;
- Recognise the legitimacy of interested and defined stakeholders;
- Give due recognition to the respect for human rights;
- Ensure the use of best practice regarding the health and safety of all construction workers from whatever background on all of our construction projects;
- Promote the participation of women in construction; and
- Respect the well-being of employees treating them fairly and with cultural sensitivity.
Civil society

The totality of what has become known, as the People’s Commonwealth is far greater than the pan-Commonwealth associations and organisations of which it is usually seen to comprise. The wealth of expertise and resource and extraordinary reach of the unofficial Commonwealth can achieve impact just as successfully as governments. We shall:

- Continue to codify good practice in our organisations and business enterprises;
- Do more to cross-connect the networks on a country level;
- Align our official CAA activities with the objectives of the Commonwealth Foundation;
- Provide practical and technical assistance for the creation of capacities needed to promote people-centred development in the communities in which we work; and
- Even up the levels of access to technology, applications and skills and to eliminate the divide between and within countries.

Raise the profile

The People’s Commonwealth has a crucial role to play in raising the profile of the Commonwealth. We shall:

- Participate in and encourage the forming of partnerships with our colleagues within the Commonwealth;
- Engage with and share best practice;
- Develop and encourage access to our websites as portals of learning and sharing;
- Remain in regular contact with our member institutes; and
- Promote the aims and objectives of the Commonwealth among our members;

Young people

The youth must be offered more opportunities to involve themselves in the Commonwealth. We shall:

- Encourage the increase of Commonwealth studies in the schools of architecture in the commonwealth;
- Encourage students to study architecture;
- Promote the exchange and interaction of students studying architecture within the Commonwealth to develop their knowledge and to become aware of their role as global citizens;
- Recognise and promote the work of students of architecture within the Commonwealth through competitions and awards;

Education

Education is the glue of the Commonwealth connection. In recognising that two-thirds of the world’s knowledge institutions are in Commonwealth countries, we shall:

- Maximise the opportunities for high-quality learning through the CAA Validation process;
- Promote and facilitate the exchange of architectural teachers within the Commonwealth;
- Recognise the contribution that architectural teachers make through appropriate recognition schemes;
- Encourage and inculcate the value of life-long learning among our members; and
- Utilise the role that our institutions can play in social transformation and economic development by promoting standards through vocational training

HIV/AIDS

Recognising that the Commonwealth has more than 60 percent of global HIV infectivity, we shall:

- Endeavour to ensure that HIV/AIDS awareness programmes are implemented on all our construction projects.
Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a broad, and integrated interdisciplinary concept that seeks to satisfy the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and which emphasises the interrelationships between world problems and their solutions. It calls for all countries to nurture new values, behaviours and lifestyles conducive to building a sustainable future. Therefore in support of sustainable development we shall:

- Acknowledge a holistic approach to sustainable development that centres on environment, society and economy and their interrelationships;
- Develop and employ our special knowledge and skills to minimise the consumption of scarce resources, and the emission of harmful gasses and noxious waste.
- Promote and implement those technologies aimed at furthering the use of energy and material resources;
- Ensure that design and construction are efficient and socially and environmentally responsible and,
- Continuously evaluate and validate our contribution to the principles of sustainable development.

Signed by the Presidents of the Institutes and Associations of Architects within the Commonwealth on behalf of the Commonwealth community of architects: