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Item 7.2 on the agenda

ACTIVITY'S REPORT BY REGION II VICE-PRESIDENT ISTELIANNA ATANASSOVA

INTORE

The UIA REGION II is composed by 25 Member sections including 30 countries from Europe, the area of the Black sea and the Caspian sea, part of Asia, the Near and the Middle East.

It is a big region with a great diversity of cultures, styles of life, nationalities and religions.

Our Member sections have different structures - some of them are individual and independent entity, others participate in UIA in group as Collective members and there are also other UIA Member sections which are part of one big organization composed by engineers, architects and other professions. To complete the picture I have to highlight that 7 regional organizations are operating on the territory of Region II.

Therefore I have to say that Region II is a unique case in UIA, it is a small model of the whole world, it is very interesting to be part of it, but it is not easy to manage it.

I am the Vice President for Region II and the Council members from Region 2 are: Aysen Ciravoglu - Turkey, Fani Vavili - Greece, Ruta Leitanaite - Baltic countries and Bis Lisowski - Poland. Later Bis Lisowski has been replaced by Grzegorz Stiasny and later on by Marek Chrobak - all from Poland.

In my work as a Vice President for Region II I was guided by few simple principles:

- 1. To raise the authority of UIA and also raise the authority of the Member sections** by supporting their initiatives and endorsing their position on a national level.
- 2. To keep the region united until anything else is decided**, to exchange experience and discuss together the important professional topics and the problems related to local laws and authorities or to the structure of the MS from RII.
- 3. To establish better cooperation between the UIA and the international professional organizations acting on the territory of Region II and to create strong Partnerships with the International partners of UIA**
- 4. To consult all MS from Region II for crucial topics, to respect the decisions of the Majority and defend these decisions in Council and in Bureau.**
- 5. To provide equal access to the UIA Governance and activities for all Organizations-members from R II and work in complete transparency.**

I find the last 2 points very important, because they give us the possibility to avoid the conflict of interest and the double standards when taking important decisions. It is a pity, but we have sometime such cases in UIA.

In the reported period of only 23 months many troubles occurred in Region II.

- The COVID 19 pandemic has totally changed our lives and taught us to work in very different conditions and isolation.
- The war in Ukraine destroyed the life of millions of people and especially in the European countries from Region II. Ukraine, Russia and Belorussia are in Region II.
- We also have in Region II the permanent conflicts in Syria, Israel, Palestine, Regional conflicts in the Western Balkan area and in the area of the Caspian sea.
- Many disasters happened also in our region - the explosion in Beirut- Lebanon, the earthquake in Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.

Therefore the economical situation of many Member sections in Region II is very difficult and we had to face every day different challenges.

I would like to express our sincere gratitude to all Members of Council and the President of the UIA for their support and commitment to the Member sections from Region 2, to their numerous problems and requests.

Despite all the difficulties, our Region II is united and is giving evidence of strong solidarity between its members and with all countries from the world.

In the reported mandate of 23 months the Council members from R II worked hard. Different events were organized by the Working bodies in this period - RII representatives were participating everywhere.

Ruta Leitanaite represented Region II in the TFG and in the Financial Committee

Fani Vavili was in the UIA Commission Education and the UIA Public Health Group.

Aysen Ciravoglu was in the UIA Commissions - PPC and SDG.

Bohdan Lisowski represented RII in the Communication Committee - later he was replaced by Aysen Ciravoglu.

As VP for Region II I participated in all discussions and important decisions taken by the UIA Governance. What exactly did I do in these 23 months?

► **I participated in 28 meetings related to the UIA Governance and main activities:**

- 12 Council meetings
- 9 Bureau meetings
- 6 Regional meetings organized by me
- 1 regional meeting organized by the TFG for presenting their proposals

In order to provide better information to the MS from Region II about the work in UIA and the possibilities for partnerships I invited different guests to our meetings:

- One of the regional meetings was together with the Presidents of the seven regional organizations operating in R II and Representatives of UN Habitat

- Another regional meeting was with the Directors of the UIA Commissions

- **Our** last regional meeting was with the candidates for UIA President for the next term

As VP for RII I always tried to provide better information to the MS from Region II and looked for valuable partnerships and common activities with the other entities of UIA as well as with the UIA regional and global Partners.

► **I carried out Surveys for all important topics and decisions** - the results were announced to the Council. The Surveys were on the following matters:

- Survey on improving the governance of UIA and Region 2
- Survey on the different types of structures of our MS according to the UIA A&B and possible improvement for having a fair representation of all architects in the UIA.
- Survey on the proposed registration fees for the Congress in CPH and other topics related to the Congress organization
- Survey on the economical situation of the UIA MS in R II and their Participation in the Congress and GA in Copenhagen'23

The Members of Region II actively participated in the Surveys. I always announced only the results of the Surveys and never gave information about the individual answers.

The system of some kind of Referendums gave me the possibility to know the opinion of the majority of the MS from RII and defend it in the Council and Bureau.

► **In relation to the war in Ukraine, together with the President of the National Union of Architects of Ukraine Al. Chyzhevsky, we initiated some important activities.**

● Except the Declarations of solidarity and the strong support of the UIA Governance and the President Jose Luis Cortes to our Ukrainian colleagues, we created a short-term group and discussion about the possibilities to help the Ukrainian Union of Architects. Representatives of RII and RI, also of the Ukrainian MS as well as some possible partners were participating in the meeting.

● As a result we made a proposal in two steps to the UIA Council - the first was the establishment of an Action Group for Solidarity with Ukraine. The next step was proposed to create a permanent structure that will express the UIA reaction and solidarity with all our Member-organizations in case of war, big natural disasters or other cases of Emergency. **Together with our Ukrainian MS we proposed the structure of the Action Group for solidarity with Ukraine and the structure of the future global UIA entity called "Emergency Commission". We intended to work in partnership with different organizations. The new Emergency Commission based on the experience of all regions and UIA Working bodies had to create a strategy for the activities and reaction of the UIA in cases of Emergency.** Some concrete ideas and goals have been proposed and even reported to the extraordinary GA in May 2022, but later the Council decided to postpone this initiative for the future as well as the elaboration of general UIA Policy and Strategy in case of wars, natural disasters and other situations of emergency. **Obviously, the necessity of such Policy and Strategy is already well understood, because all colleagues are speaking about it now, at the end of our mandate.**

► **Region II initiated and organized also 4 important International events** with the participation of high level experts from RII and occasionally from RI as well as in partnership with the UN Habitat.

The first two events were supporting the very important UIA Forum in Madrid "Affordable housing - removing barriers" organized in a perfect, very professional and friendly way by our Spanish Colleagues - May 2022.

- **nr.1** - Under the leadership of the Vice-presidents and with the participation of the Council members regional workshops and discussions on Affordable housing occurred in all regions. The workshop of Region II was held on 06.05.2022 and was a very successful event with important conclusions and proposals for the final Declaration of the Forum. I would like to express my gratitude for their contribution to the Regional discussion and workshop to the four Council members from RII Ruta Leitanaite, Aysen Ciravoglu, Fani Vavili and Bohdan Lisowski and to all other participants representing the MS from R II - Sergii Buravchenko - Ukraine, Bulent Batuman - Turkey, Mina Sava and Eugen Panescu - Romania, Emil Burulyanov - Bulgaria, Nikolas Patsavos - Greece, Karim Nader - Lebanon. Sincere thanks for their participation and contribution to the organizers of the AHA Forum Angela Baldellou - Director of the Forum, Ana Moreno and Ilija Gubic, to the UIA President Jose Luis Cortes and to Javier Torner from UN Habitat.

- **nr.2** - An important side event was initiated by Ruta Leitanaite and organized by the Baltic Architects Unions Association and with the support of the UIA RI and RII, and the ACE - this is the discussion on the "Holistic renovation for modernism housing districts". The event was organized in 3 steps - online discussion in April '22, exhibition during the Forum in May'22 and a booklet published after the Forum.

- **nr.3** - Upon the initiative of the VP for RII and the National Union of Architects in Ukraine, and with the big support of the Emergency department of UN Habitat, we organized in June '22 a hybrid discussion during the World Urban Forum (WUF) in Katowice titled: "From the urban planning and governance to the challenges of recovering Ukrainian cities and territories" A very strong delegation from Ukraine held by the President of NSAU Alexander Chyzhevskiy attended the discussion, Ukrainian Mayors were participating online, Experts from the UN Habitat and the UN Economic Commission for Europe, of course the UIA President and VP for RII, as well as the Emergency Director of UN HABITAT. Allow me to express also our gratitude to the UIA Past President Gaetan Siew, representing Region V and the representatives of Region I from the UIA MS of Spain and France - Angela Baldellou - Director of the AHA Forum and Philippe Capelier - co Director of the Social Habitat Work programme, as well as to the representative of Poland Szymon Wojciechowski. I must recognize the hard work of the Ukrainian colleagues who made miracles to organize together with me the discussion in the time of war. Special thanks to all participants who made possible this very important event.

- **nr.4** - Region II is organizing under the leadership of the VP a conference during the UIA Congress in Copenhagen '2023 titled: "Partnerships for Change. Exploring the potential of UIA Region 2. Ukraine and Lebanon." I would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all Participants representing the UN Habitat, the European Investment Bank, the World Urban Campaign and the HPF, as well as to the foundation Realdania, to the UIA President and to our colleagues from Ukraine and Lebanon.

(Jose Luis Cortes - President of the International Union of Architects, Michal Mlynár - Deputy Executive Director UN Habitat, Istelianna Atanassova - Vice President of the International Union of Architects for Region 2, Christine Auclair - Coordinator, World Urban Campaign, UN-Habitat, Rasmus LAURIDSEN - Head of EIB Group Office Denmark at European Investment Bank, Jesper Nygård - CEO Realdania - Denmark, Philanthropic Foundation, Mona Rady - Chair of HPF - UN Habitat Professional Forum (HPF), UKRAINE - National Union of Architects (NSAU) - Oleksandr Chyzhevskiy - President of NSAU, Serhiy Buravchenko - Vice President of NSAU, Olena Oliynyk - Vice President of NSAU, LEBANON - Order of Engineers and Architects (OEA) - Divina Abou Jaoude & Sany Jamal - UIA Member section in Beirut).

► **The most important part of my work was to support the Member sections from Region II in their activities - online or in presence,**

- such as the Roundtable in October 2022 organized in Beirut, Lebanon as a follow-up to the Madrid Affordable Housing Forum.

- Another important event where I have been participating together with the UIA President was the Architectural Convention in Budapest in March 2023

- Also in Budapest, the UIA President and I took part in the discussion for the role of Architects and UIA in case of Emergency and Disasters, organized by the Association of Hungarian Architects.

All organizations - members of Region II worked very hard in the reported period - wonderful events have been organized in Czech Republic, in Azerbaijan, Romania, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and other countries from Region II.

► **My goals as VP were to support all Member sections from Region II, to keep the unity of the Region until anything else is decided, to respect the UIA A&B, as well as the principles of equity and transparency, to give our MS access to the information they need.**

- Such were the Regional meetings when our guests were the Regional organizations operating on the territory of Region II, or the Directors of the UIA Commissions, or our Partners from UN Habitat and recently the regional meeting on 14.06.23 with the Candidates for President at the GA in CPH'23.
- I did my best to defend the Regional decisions in the Bureau and in the Council and never refused support to any request of the MS from R II.
- Everything I did was always in respect to the UIA principles and Articles & Bylaws.

The diversity in UIA requests to implement internal rules in UIA, because the democracy is based on the respect of the different opinions and the respect of the final decisions taken by the majority. UIA is celebrating in 2023 its 75th Anniversary - over the years the organization became bigger and stronger.

For keeping the spirit of UIA, we need to follow only a few simple rules - stay together, be honest, be professional and work in favor of all.

I would like to express my high appreciation and sincere gratitude to all Members of Council and to the UIA President Jose Luis Cortes for their understanding and collegial support of all Member sections from Region II. I thank also the four Council members from RII for their active work in the UIA Working bodies. Many thanks for the devoted work of our colleagues from the UIA Secretariat and especially to the Administrative Director Sonia Cela. Special gratitude for the advices and the wisdom of the UIA Past Presidents - they have been very important for all of us in such difficult times.

It was an honor to work with all of you. Thank you.