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Internal Affairs

ACE Recommendations 2009 - Policy for Dissemination

Briefing Note to the First General Assembly in 2009

Final

Summary

It is hoped that the General Assembly will agree to adopt the ACE Recommendations 2009 under Item 4.1. of the Agenda, pending any modifications that might be decided during the Assembly meeting if appropriate. In the case that this occurs and bearing in mind that it will remain a living document there will be a need to decide on strategies and means to promote the recommendations in at least three phases. The first phase is during the Election Campaign at National level towards the Candidates for election to the European Parliament. The second phase will be in the new Parliament Building itself towards the elected Members for the next five years and the final phase will be towards the new European Commission, which will be put in place at the end of 2009 or beginning of 2010.

In order to be effective there is a strong need for effective, close coordination between the ACE and its Member Organisations for each of these three phases. This is a crucial element in order to be able to assess the impact of the ACE and its policies against the recognised need of more ownership by its Members. Therefore Member Organisations are called upon to fully inform each other and the ACE of actions that they take arising from the guidance given in this Note.

Introduction

The Executive Board of the ACE has been engaged in a detailed and intense internal consultation process to further develop the proposed Recommendations of the ACE for 2009. The first, early draft of the Recommendations was debated in the General Assembly in November 2008 but the document has evolved and changed considerably since that time whereby several interim versions have been worked on in which the comments received from Member organisations and Members of the Board have been taken into account.

After further consideration at its first meeting in January the Executive Board adopted at its second Meeting in 2009 the final draft version of the proposed Recommendations 2009, as a living document, and it is this document that has been put to the General Assembly for adoption under Item 4.1. of the Agenda. Meanwhile the document has been circulated to all ACE Member Organisations to be used by them as they see fit and they were also asked to submit comments. In the event that the Document is adopted there is an urgent need to coordinate its dissemination at National level towards the candidates for the European elections in June 2009. There is also a need to consider how best to launch the Recommendations to the newly elected Parliament and newly appointed European Commission later in 2009.

This Note sets out ideas for collaboration on this important public relations exercise and the General Assembly is asked to debate the approaches suggested in order to potentially guide the work of the ACE on this crucial action over the next year.

Promotion of Recommendations towards Candidates for Election

The first step that must be taken after adoption of the Recommendations at European level is to quickly bring the Recommendations to the attention of all Candidates to the European Parliament. This work will necessarily have to be carried out by the Member Organisations at National level, as apart from the fact that it does not seem appropriate, it is not possible or reasonable to expect that the ACE can do

this with the resources at its disposal. A number of ideas have already been debated at different meetings of ACE Working Bodies, among which are the following:

1. Each Candidate should be asked to highlight which of the Recommendations (ideally 3) they would be willing to promote if elected to the European Parliament. By tabulating responses this would give a picture to the ACE of the priority issues as seen by the Candidates, related to the concerns of the architectural profession. Furthermore, after election, the tables could be used as a tool to pursue successful candidates to actually implement the three priorities that they had identified prior to the elections.
2. Many Member Organisations are already preparing statements of policy that they intend to promote towards the candidates for the European Elections. It is suggested that the ACE Recommendations could be incorporated into the National Recommendations or indeed appended to the National Recommendations for the information of Candidates at National level. In this way coordination and coherence between National objectives and European objectives could be assured.
3. Should Member Organisations not wish to promote the ACE Recommendations directly by one or two means noted above it would then be hoped that they would at least bring the existence of the ACE Recommendations to the attention of the Candidates in their country. It is recalled that without the cooperation and input of the Member Organisations the ACE itself has no real influence or relevance.

During the debate of the General Assembly fresh or individual ideas about how to promote the Recommendations towards the Candidates will be most welcome.

Promotion of Recommendations to the newly-elected Parliament

At the present time the Executive Board is discussing, as the Roadmap for 2009-2010 included in the documentation for the Assembly indicated, the concept of holding a launch Event at the European Parliament in the autumn of 2009. For practical purposes it may be that associating this Event with the autumn General Assembly would ensure a better participation of ACE Delegates but the date must be carefully coordinated with the sessions in the European Parliament and therefore it may not be possible to associate the two. It is crucial that the Event will attract a high number of MEPs and it should therefore be a short Event (possibly an evening Event) with a cocktail reception.

The concept is to have a short presentation of the Recommendations by a PowerPoint Presentation and to be able to distribute the Recommendations in a printed format. The Event will therefore be held in Brussels or Strasbourg to suit the timetable of the Parliamentary Sessions and having regard also to the solution that may appear most suitable for that purpose, and it would be necessary to consider who is best placed to make the presentation at a time closer to the identified day.

One particular action might be targeting the members of the newly re-formed Intergroup Urban-Logement – hoping that it will be re-formed – either in July or in September.

In addition to hosting an Event, it would be necessary to publish the Recommendations on the ACE Website and in this context consideration is being given to the idea of creating an interactive matrix whereby elected MEPs would be able to identify the three Recommendations which they consider are the most important from a European policy point of view. This exercise could then help the ACE in identifying its priority actions as the support of MEPs can often be a significant assistance to successfully achieving political objectives.

An important aspect of the concept for launching the recommendations in the European Parliament will be the need to carefully time the Event in order to keep costs at a reasonable level. Ideally as this relates to internal affairs the Event should not receive external sponsorship, although the concept of an external partner is one that could potentially be explored. It should be noted that the Event is not a highly ambitious concept but rather one to transmit a political and policy message to decision makers.

Promotion of Recommendations towards the European Commission

Given certain internal strains within the European Institutional structure it has already been signalled that the new European Commission may not come into office until early 2010. Should this be the

case it would be necessary to decide on a separate campaign to launch the ACE Recommendations towards the new European Commissioners. The Executive Board had hoped that a single launch Event could be organised for both Parliament and Commission in Brussels but this is now looking most unlikely, and all in all not the best solution. As a result, an original idea would be most welcome as to how to effectively promote the ACE Recommendations towards the new European Commission. It goes without saying that the Secretariat will ensure that each and every Commissioner and their Head of Cabinet will be issued with a printed copy of the ACE Recommendations as soon as their appointment is confirmed. The question then arises should there be an attempt to arrange a series of meetings with the Commissioner's Responsible for the main subject areas that interest the ACE so that the promotion of the Recommendations can occur in a face-to-face meeting. This may turn out to be the most pragmatic approach in which case the following Directorates General should be targeted:

- Internal market
- Energy and Transport (at least energy as the two areas likely to be separated again)
- Research
- Environment
- Education and Culture
- Regional Development
- Trade

The above main Directorates General cover the main policy areas in which the ACE is active and it seems prudent that the ACE should address an action towards each one specifically and that each action should be tailored to the specific topics covered by the relevant Directorate General.

Conclusion

This Note is just an "Aide Mémoire" setting out some ideas for the promotion of the ACE Recommendations and should be seen as a stimulus document for Delegates to consider so as still be able to undertake a detailed preparation for their input at the General Assembly.

End of Note