

Press release—Guatemala, January 12th, 2012

## 5th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam *LABR CounterSite*

### *Posconflicto* Laboratory: **MAKING CITY + PRODUCTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMME IN GUATEMALA & CENTRAL AMERICA**

With the signing the Peace Accords between the Government of Guatemala and the URNG in 1996, Central America's last armed conflict came to an end. In a post-conflict political situation, with debilitating public and private institutions, Central America has yet to establish a clear housing policy. We declare the urgent necessity of a project to rethink architecture, the city, the territory and the idea of the political, to guarantee housing access to all —especially the most disfavoured and vulnerable. Without further delay, we propose a Productive Housing Programme, with a pilot project in Guatemala City, directed towards the construction of a national and Central American housing policy.

The Productive Housing Programme combines dwelling with the space of production —thus potentiating labour— and relates it to the emerging economies of the cities and rural areas. Starting from architecture, we propose an archetypal system capable of adapting to different territorial scales by means of an efficient and accessible technology, redefining urban living. Similarly, the programme incorporates a strategic urban project, exemplary in the common strengthening of productive and cooperative centralities as positive drivers of development.

Fundamentally, the Productive Housing Programme proposes to reinstall the principle of subsidiarity through the provision of a new political pact. Based on a crossed subsidy model, self-sustainable in terms of wealth creation and social justice, the programme proposes legal and financial instruments for decentralization to promote housing policy at a local level, within a national and regional agenda. In a laboratory method, architecture becomes the foreground and is pro-active, as a steering agent for the urgent provision of housing and the possibility of making city in Central America.

'*Posconflicto* Laboratory: Making City + Productive Housing Programme in Guatemala & Central America' is a project developed by the recently created Housing and Urban Development Metropolitan Agency of the Municipality of Guatemala, the Vice-Ministry of Housing of Guatemala, the



URBANÍSTICA—Taller del Espacio Público, *Productive Housing: Subsidiarity as a Political Pact* (Guatemala, 2011)

Press release—Guatemala, January 12th 2012

Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala and the Asociación Centroamericana Taller de Arquitectura (a—c—t—a), with the support from the Institute of Housing and Urban Development Studies in Rotterdam (IHS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB—GU-T1076). The project has been selected among 320 proposals worldwide, as one of the 25 demonstrative projects or *CounterSites* in the 5th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR).



## 5th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam 2012

*Projects around the world come together in 'making city'*

The 5th IABR: *Making City*, examines how cities can continue to generate wealth and welfare in a sustainable manner. Part of the answer is that we must 'make city' in a fundamentally different way to how we have done so up to now. Projects in such places as New York, Paris, Sao Paulo, New Delhi, Rotterdam and Guatemala demonstrate that standard solutions no longer suffice. In the future, city development will have to involve much more teamwork among different disciplines and continually changing alliances in which social agendas and economic ambitions must strike a balance with each other. For only then, the 5th IABR argues, will cities be able to offer solutions to the major socio-economic and ecological challenges of this century.

---

*Contact information:*

[info@posconflicto-laboratory.org](mailto:info@posconflicto-laboratory.org)

[www.posconflicto-laboratory.org](http://www.posconflicto-laboratory.org)

[www.iabr.nl](http://www.iabr.nl)