

How will we live together?

**Statement by Hashim Sarkis
Curator of the 17th International Architecture Exhibition**

We need a new spatial contract. In the context of widening political divides and growing economic inequalities, we call on architects to imagine spaces in which we can generously live together:

- together as human beings who, despite our increasing individuality, yearn to connect with one another and with other species across digital and real space
- together as new households looking for more diverse and dignified spaces for inhabitation
- together as emerging communities that demand equity, inclusion and spatial identity
- together across political borders to imagine new geographies of association
- and together as a planet facing crises that require global action for us to continue living at all.

The architects invited to participate in the Biennale Architettura 2020 are encouraged to engage other professions and constituencies—artists, builders, and craftspeople, but also politicians, journalists, social scientists, and everyday citizens. In effect, the Biennale Architettura 2020 asserts the overlooked role of the architect as both cordial convener and custodian of the spatial contract

In parallel, the Biennale Architettura 2020 also maintains that it is in its material, spatial, and cultural specificity that architecture inspires the ways we live together. In that respect, we ask the participants to highlight those aspects of the main theme that are uniquely architectural.

The curators of the national pavilions are called upon to address one or more of the sub-themes of the Biennale. The need for more inclusive social housing and equipment or for more connective urban and territorial tissue remains as pressing in emerging economies as in advanced ones.

The year 2020 has often been referred to as a milestone on the path to a better future. Many nations and cities have devised a “Vision 2020.” The year is upon us. We look to the collective architectural imagination to meet this momentous occasion with creativity and courage.

Hashim Sarkis