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Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 18 June 2024

Dear members and colleagues of UNISCAPE Network,

In three weeks, on 10 July, we will be holding the UNISCAPE 2024 General Assembly meeting.

As you have been informed, the General Assembly is organized for the first time in the Canary Islands, in the city of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, at the main headquarters of one of UNISCAPE members, the CajaCanarias Foundation, in collaboration with three other members of the network: the University of La Laguna ULL, the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria ULPGC and the CICOP Foundation. To all of them, which are based in the Canary Islands, go my heartfelt thanks for their commitment and trust to this initiative and support, also in the organization of the International Conference that will take place before the GA meeting, from the 8th to the 10 of July.

Although it is the first time that the General Assembly will take place in the Canary Islands, UNISCAPE's relationship with them dates back to its origin (2008) when the ULPGC was one of the founder members, but must of all for some relevant events that took place there over the 16 years of network activities, that have decisively determined positions, arguments and strategies regarding the European Landscape and the processes to implement the concept of Landscape in the formation, dissemination, education and investigation.

Let me just mention in this respect the Seminar and publication of the "Canarian Manifesto for the European Landscape" (2012) and the "The Las Palmas Declaration of Rectors for Landscape Education in Europe" (2015) both celebrated in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; or the collaborations in events with the *Observatorio del Paisaje de Canarias* such as *La Bienal de Canarias* (2010), *Proyectar El paisaje* (2014) and the ITLA International Congress of Terraced Landscape, organized in this case with the support of the Canarian Government.

So you can imagine how enthusiastic I was when I accepted to realize with the Executive Board the General Assembly in the Canary Islands, especially in the city where I was born and in the region where I centered and planned internationally my academic life in Landscape studies and professionally as an architect.

I hope and wish to share with all of you a few days in this very particular territory, undoubtedly one of the most exciting and interesting laboratories on Landscape in the world.

Alexander von Humbolt already mentioned it in his visit and expedition to Tenerife in 1799, by collecting notes, drawings, and documentation before the publication of *Cosmos*. Let's hope that Humboldt will serve as an incentive to face the new challenges that we have started since 2022, with the collective work done for the edition of the book "Cultivating the continuity of the European Landscape", that has been recently published by Springer Nature and that will be presented at the Conference.

New challenges that are focused on a series of actions of renovations we have initiated also in the relationship with the Council of Europe and the European Union, hoping that they will bear fruit in the short term. As the poet Pedro Garcia Cabrera (author of reference of the Conference) said: "*la esperanza nos mantiene*".





New challenges, in the need to articulate a new organization of the network, in coherence with the renewed European context, with structural changes to consider so that they can serve as a catapult for all the work done so far, from a critical reflection, towards a promising destiny for UNISCAPE and for Landscape Education and Research in Europe.

Precisely for all this, the active and in-person participation of all members in the General Assembly in Tenerife is of utmost importance, in particular because of the election of the next members of the Executive Board and Director.

It seems reasonable from this perspective to consider essential also to renew the positions of President and the Vice Presidents, as we have agreed within the Executive Board, and with this to create a working team able to act in a triple perspective of short, medium and long term. These are factors requiring at the same time experience and youth sufficiently committed to face these challenges and coordinate strategies articulated from the Members to their President.

After so many years as President, without forgetting the years of vice-president and founding member, I can only thank you all for your trust, respect and friendship and I confirm my willingness to collaborate, help and commit to the new representatives who will be elected in the General Assembly in Tenerife 2024.

You will now understand even more now why it is essential to participate in this General Assembly and the reason for my daring to request your presence. Not only to cast a vote, but most of all to build an environment capable of generating ideas and principles, arguments and criticisms. This is exactly the reason for UNISCAPE to organize every year a major event linked to the General Assembly meeting, with the aim of generating synergies, sharing experiences and thoughts and building common landscapes.

Yours sincerely,

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