



## URBAN AGE SOUTH AMERICA CONFERENCE INVESTIGATES THE FUTURE OF SÃO PAULO

*100 leading urbanists address spatial and social transformations in 25 world cities*

Over 40 presentations about innovative urban transformations in 25 cities set the stage for the Urban Age South America conference, the eighth in a now annual series of interdisciplinary investigations into the future of cities. On 3 – 5 December 2008, Urban Age brings together 100 leaders in city making – half a dozen mayors, policymakers, eminent scholars and authors side-by-side with the architects and planners of major urban regeneration projects around the globe – to address the key social, spatial and economic issues underlying urban growth in South America. Focusing in-depth on the significant structural changes affecting São Paulo, Brazil's largest city and major economic powerhouse - with a growing population of over 19 million it is today the 5th largest city in the world - the Urban Age South America conference concludes a year of research into regional urban trends in South America's five fastest growing cities: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Bogotá and Lima.

The Urban Age South America conference offers a mirror to reflect on global urban issues with the world's leading experts of urban change. The impact of ever-increasing sprawl on energy consumption and pollution, the exponential increase in car ownership and the debilitating effect of uncontrolled growth on basic urban infrastructure – such as public transport, water and sewer systems – are analysed in the context of emerging governance structures, a growing service economy and new forms of political engagement.

### **Keynote speakers include:**

- Saskia Sassen, the world expert on the impacts of globalisation on the economy of cities
- Lee Baca, the Sheriff of Los Angeles responsible for the city's security
- Janette Sadik-Khan, Transport Commissioner for New York City
- Tony Travers, advisor to London's transport policy and the city's congestion charge
- Richard Sennett, who will provide insights into spatial and social developments in cities confronting economic and demographic growth
- Amanda Burden, Director of New York's Department of City Planning
- Jose Serra, Governor of the State of São Paulo
- The mayors of São Paulo, Lima, Rio de Janeiro, Washington D.C., Bogotá and Curitiba
- Gerald Frug, Professor of Law at Harvard University, expert on decision-making and legal structures in cities and across the world;
- Sophie Body-Gendrot, Director of the Center for Urban Studies at the University Paris-Sorbonne,

- Leading architects and planners such as Charles Correa of Charles Correa Associates in Mumbai, Enrique Norton of TEN Arquitectos in Mexico City and New York City, Klaus Bode of BDSP Partnership in London and Fabio Casiroli, founder of Systematica in Milan.

Additional newly released Urban Age research conducted by the LSE includes mappings of settlement patterns and the political, geographic, economic, and physical form of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Bogotá and Lima alongside New York City, Shanghai, London, Mexico City, Johannesburg, Berlin and Mumbai. These include detailed analysis of residential density, mobility networks and urban form. The core themes of social exclusion and urban violence, public transport and mobility, and the relationship between urban growth and infrastructure provision are further supplemented by local research teams in São Paulo.

In summing up the conference goals, Ricky Burdett, Director of Urban Age, said: 'The Urban Age South America conference will bring the particular conditions of the five fastest growing cities in South America into sharp focus with regional urban trends worldwide. We expect the spotlight on Brazil's economic powerhouse to provide important insight about city making and how public transport offers social mobility and economic justice as well as a means to navigate complex or fragmented – and increasingly diverse – urban landscapes. Equally important are the lessons emerging from organic urban development patterns. While the barrios and favelas continue to grow, initiatives aimed at retrofitting these informal settlements are creating more inclusive and stable places for people to live.'

Wolfgang Nowak said 'By co-organising the Urban Age project with the LSE, Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society is interested in developing a 'grammar of success' that makes cities work better as social, political and environmental mechanisms. The objective of the Sao Paulo conference is to bring together urban experiences from around the world to better understand how we can create more equitable cities for the future'.

For more information, go to <http://www.urban-age.net>

### **About Urban Age**

Urban Age engages the world's increasing urbanisation through events and research that shape the thinking of urban leaders and practice of sustainable urban development. Initiated by the Cities Programme at the London School of Economics and Political Science and Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society, Urban Age is structured around international outreach supporting the creation of a new urban agenda for global cities. Its worldwide interdisciplinary network of urban experts lead an "on the ground" investigation of policies, developments and projects with up-to-date insights collected and shared through conferences, workshops, seminars and publications in cities as diverse as New York City, Shanghai, London, Mexico City, Johannesburg, Berlin, Mumbai, São Paulo and Istanbul.

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