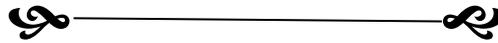


## EDITORIAL



It is undeniable that the publication of this journal is a significant milestone in the achievements of the Faculty of Architecture of the University Moratuwa. With the initiation of the Annual International Conference on ‘Cities, People and Places’ three years ago, its Department of Architecture took a bold step to venture into the arena of international discourse after almost half a century of it having been involved in offering programs on architecture and allied arts. Needless to say, the recently established urban design program has been a leader amongst them and the focus of the conference as well as this publication is ample evidence to this claim.

It is also undeniable that the launching of the conference was a visionary step far ahead of its time. Sri Lanka, since the end of its unfortunate internal conflict has seen a tremendous focus and progress in its urban developments transforming many towns and cities. In the process, many of the peri-urban villages have been dragged into the centre of urbanity. Today, the country is witnessing yet again the foundations of one of the most ambitious urban transformation programs. The newly declared making of the Western Province to what may be called a Megapolis is no simple task. It is as if the Department of Architecture and the University of Moratuwa could foresee that they will need to be equipped with the intellectual capacities and skills to spearhead these enormous and far reaching transformations. Outcomes of the conference and the publication show that they indeed have laid the foundations for the construction of such knowledge through international participation.

The conference and the publication—Cities People Places—however have far wider goals. It intends to spearhead a movement in urban design and urban transformations. That is, to enable the places we contribute to make through planning, urban design and architecture to have the innate qualities that we as a human civilization has always aspired to. They have been attempted through numerous approaches of the built-environment professions, from garden cities to smart cities, yet have often been not achieved well. PLACE, as Heidegger tells us is the most rudimentary yet most powerful notion through which Man dwells on earth poetically. Making of them is partly in the hands of the built-environment professionals. This publication takes yet another step in enabling us to contribute to achieving this task with insights and shared understandings on the reciprocal relations between people and places. We invite you to contribute your thoughts and share your research, so that we will empower such a movement.

Dr. Ranjith Dayaratne, Bahrain.