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On 19th-21st June and coinciding with the 'Dag van de Architectuur' (Day of Architecture) in the Netherlands, the office Noord Zuid Architectuur organized a 'Spanish Architectural Business Meeting'. The aim of the meeting was to establish links, exchange experiences with architects and Dutch offices, study the possible collaborations with university professors from both countries, attract Dutch investors/customers for projects in Catalonia/Spain and make contact with the ICEX and ACCIÓ in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands architects were welcomed by Enrique Fanjul and his team in the Economic and commercial Office of the 'Ministerio Español de Economía y Competitividad' in the Hague (ICEX). We were also accompanied by Rosa Isabel Peña, lawyer at Roca Junyent law firm, specialist in administrative law, public procurement, town planning and environment and the dutch architect Sandro Sierhuis. We started with a work-lunch with Spanish products, immediately followed by presentations of the participating architects. Mr. Fanjul gave a presentation about different topics such as the current situation of the Dutch market in relation

with the Spanish economy and he also supplied information about what kind of actions ICEX can offer Spanish professionals abroad.

At the end of the event Dr Architect María Jesús Gonzalez guided the group on a tour along the most interesting buildings in the centre of the Hague.

In the evening the group was invited to a business dinner where each of the architects presented their experiences and challenges facing the internationalization, especially with regard to the Dutch market.

On Saturday morning the group visited the social housing project (Centraal Wonen Delft ? co-housing) designed by Flip Krabbendam in the 1970s, who was present to explain the context in which the project was drawn up, and guide the Group on a tour in and around the project. The Catalan representatives and Dr architect Flip Krabbendam were both interested in the actual situation regarding shared housing in Catalonia and the Netherlands, and they were very enthusiastic about the idea of exchanging experiences on the subject at an academic and professional level.

The group also visited the Delft Central Station, designed by ?Mecanoo?. A presentation about this project and the transformation of the surrounding area, designed by Joan Busquets took place at the office ?Delftbouwt?.

Ms. Natascha Bijsterveld of the Acció Office of the BENELUX in Brussels accompanied the group at mid day. In her presentation she explained the possibilities for the architects to become part of the Acció projects in the Benelux or in other parts of the world. Questions were answered and views and perspectives were exchanged.

Afterwards visits were made to the university library designed by Mecanoo, a local architectural office DP6 they explained their experience on working with BIM and a social-cultural-gastronomical facility ?Lijm en Cultuur? that is located in the former ?Lijm en Gelatine Fabriek?, the glu and gelatin factory. The day ended in Gouda enjoying the activities of Gouda ?Waterstad? (Gouda city of water) which is held each June along the canals of the city.

On Sunday the group brought a visit to the most interesting places of the architectural centre of Rotterdam with a lunch at the BasQ restaurant in the ?Martkthal?, designed by MVRDV. At this location Dr. architect Miquel Pérez Sanchez presented his research on a new architectural approach to the Egyptian culture and the hidden geometry in the construction of the pyramids.

In view of the success of this meeting we are already working on a second edition of a ?Spanish Architectural Business Meeting? which will take place in 2016, again coinciding with the ?Day of the Architecture? in The Netherlands.

By Marta Companys Taxés, Noord Zuid Architectuur.
COAC International Correspondent in Gouda, The Netherlands.

Anna Brullet: "A very interesting meeting and an enrichment by its diversity (its topics, its places, situations and assistants). The excellent reception as well as the information that was offered to us at the offices of ICEX. The guided tour of the Hague led by the architect Dr. María Jesús Gonzalez as well as the visit of the "social housing project" with architect Dr. Flip

Krabbendam designer of the project.

Finally thanks for the excellent organization by the architect Marta Companys Taxes of Noord Zuid Architectuur which achieved the goal to establish experiences and job links between the two countries that are already beginning to pay off. She created a perfect atmosphere in a friendly work climate during the different activities which took place during this weekend.

Silvia Ortiz de Elgea: "The visit to Holland organized by Noord Zuid Architectuur was for my office very interesting. Firstly the reception by ICEX in the Hague. It was a first insight into the Dutch reality in relation to potential customers or collaborations with my office. For my experience events like this have a key role for adding synergies.

Knowing the actual reality of the Netherlands ? I knew how it was earlier because I studied here as an Erasmus student ? it helped me to understand the architectural transformation of the different scenarios we visited. Moreover it was special to visit those places together with Dutch and Spanish architects based in the Netherlands which helped to connect en talk about possible future architectural projects in both countries. Encouraging intercultural relations between architects for me has always been rewarding. Without these contacts everyone realizes his work in his own way because one is not familiar with the work of colleagues. It was an intensive, interesting and on top of that a very nice weekend. ?

Marta Companys, COAC International Correspondent in Gouda, The Netherlands.



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