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RIO DE JANEIRO HOSTS GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF CITIES

The 2013 Urban Age conference, organised by the London School of Economics and Political Science and Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society, will take place in Rio de Janeiro on 23-25 October 2013. Like all previous Urban Age events held in London, Istanbul, Hong Kong, Mumbai, Mexico City and New York, the Rio conference will bring together global city leaders, investors, designers, academics and activists to discuss the key issues facing urban society today.

The main focus of the Urban Age City Transformations conference is how large-scale projects and small-scale initiatives are affecting – in a positive and negative way – the social and economic well-being of urban dwellers. Few cities in the world are changing at the pace and scale of Rio de Janeiro, as it confronts the problems and opportunities of economic growth and social change. Rio is investing in its future with major projects that are designed to improve accessibility, urban infrastructure, security and social integration - all this in the midst of the global limelight of the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games.

The Urban Age conference will tackle these issues head-on with some of the major actors involved in urban change at a global level today. The Mayor of Rio, Eduardo Paes, will be joined by the Executive Director of UN Habitat Joan Clos and the civic leaders of Barcelona, Bogotá, Medellín and New York to discuss how urban change can best be governed. Leading world architects, public and private clients - including Bjarke Ingels, the dynamic force behind BIG Architects and Amanda Burden, the planning commissioner of New York City – will explain how their visions have transformed entire urban neighborhoods in London, New York, Hamburg, Barcelona, Buenos Aires and Rio. Anthropologist Luis Soares and the founder of Transparency International Peter Eigen will explore the core social and political issues emerging from the current debate about the future development of Rio and its diverse communities.

Tessa Jowell, the UK's Minister for the Olympics who delivered the successful 2012 Games in London, will compare notes with Maria Silvia Marques, President of Rio's Municipal Olympic Company and Henk Ovink who is masterminding the Dutch Government's plans for post 2028 Olympic bid. Key actors from Rio's public agencies, academia, business and civil society - such as Celso Athayde, president of Favela Holding and Washington Farjado, adviser for urban affairs to Mayor Paes - will engage

in a discussion with their counterparts from Mumbai, Cape Town, Medellín, London and New York .

Ricky Burdett, Director of LSE Cities and the Urban Age, said:

“As cities take centre stage in determining the future of society, we need to better understand how to make them more equitable and integrated. The Urban Age City Transformations conference will do just that. By bringing together global players in urban governance, design and development in one of the world’s most dynamic cities - now readying itself for global mega-events and grappling with the pacification process of the favelas - the Urban Age will provide a stimulating platform for debate and exchange.”

The City Transformations conference will be attended by over 150 delegates from around the world, and conference sessions will situate urban change within the context of economic growth and inward investment, social equity and the design of cities.

In parallel to the conference, the sixth Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award will be presented in Rio de Janeiro to coincide with the Urban Age Conference, and this year will recognise a project located in the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro. An independent jury drawn from an international community of urban leaders and designers as well as business, media and civic actors will evaluate all submissions and determine the winner of the 100,000 USD prize.

The Urban Age City Transformations conference is being organised in partnership with the City of Rio, Rio Prefeitura.

For more information on LSE Cities and the Urban Age, visit <http://lsecities.net/ua/>

-NOTES TO EDITORS-

ABOUT LSE CITIES

LSE Cities is an international centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science supported by Deutsche Bank that carries out research education and outreach activities in London and abroad. Its mission is to study how people and cities interact in a rapidly urbanising world, focusing on how the design of cities impacts on society, culture and the environment. Through research, conferences, teaching and projects, the centre aims to shape new thinking and practice on how to make cities fairer and more sustainable for the next generation of urban dwellers, who will make up over 70 per cent of the global population by 2050.

ABOUT THE URBAN AGE

The Urban Age Programme, jointly organised with Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society, is an international investigation of the spatial and social dynamics of cities centred on an annual conference, research initiative and publication. Since 2005, conferences have been held in London, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Chicago, Sao Paulo, Mumbai, Berlin, Johannesburg, Mexico City, Shanghai and New York. As an event, the Urban Age catalyses the exchange of information, experiences and data across a global network of cities. The conferences operate as mobile laboratories, testing and sampling the social and physical characteristics of global cities through expert presentations and testimonials, research, site visits, mapping and informal information exchange.

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