Weaving Publicness
Socially-integrated office building with sustainable façade, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Main authors
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Summary by the jury
The winning entry of the architectural design competition for the headquarters of the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce & Sectoral Associations (AACCSA) in Ethiopia aims to contribute to the spatial improvement of the urban environment, and to create an architectural dialog engaged in a global context with a strong local identity. It does so by integrating public spaces at ground level, continuing the “busy-ness” of the street within the building. A façade made of “woven” locally-quarried trachyte stone – reminiscent of Ethiopian stone architecture and ancient textile techniques – regulates ventilation as well as sunlight.

Appraisal by the jury
The jury acknowledges the architectural and spatial qualities of the building – a carefully crafted piece of architecture within the city fabric of Addis Ababa. Of particular importance is the sequence of public spaces “weaving” the hustle and bustle of the city streetscape deep into the new facilities of the Chamber of Commerce. Trade – as a form of interaction and key activity of civic life – evolves as the central theme of the design proposition. Additionally, the jury valued the façade structure and its composition as a fresh alternative to the outlandish curtain walls that clad high-rise building throughout the city.

Project data
Context Architecture, building and civil engineering
Client Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce & Sectoral Associations (AACCSA)
Background Public commission
Planned start January 2015

Further authors
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Image 3: South elevation perspective detail: Accessibility for disabled persons via the ramp.

Image 4: West elevation with urban square and lowered podium: The wide window looks down onto polyvalent space.

Image 5: South-North section with polyvalent and flexible event space at ground level. Above: semi-public split levels.

Image 6: The façade filters sunlight. Sometimes, circulation is organized between office spaces and façade.

Image 7: Perspective of the façade filter.

Image 8: Reception looking down into polyvalent space.

Image 9: Southwest side allows for 27% of sunlight, south side 38%, and Southeast side 47%.

Image 10: Terrace view.

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