

WINDOW OF CHINA

World Expo in Shanghai to "make history," BIE chief says

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by Xinhua writer Zhang Xin

PARIS, Jan. 20 (Xinhua) -- The world exhibition orchestrator is expecting that the forthcoming World Expo 2010 will be a history-making platform for cultural and technological exchanges.

Vicente Gonzalez Loscertales, secretary-general of the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE), made this remark during an interview with Xinhua.

"I can't wait to see an excellent expo in history as the date approaches," said the BIE chief, who is anticipating the Shanghai exposition with the eagerness of an expectant mother.

Having visited the Chinese metropolis several times, the chief of the Paris-based BIE said preparations had entered their final stage with the main pavilions basically completed and interior decorating in progress.

Loscertales is expecting two records to be set in Shanghai, where a record number of exhibitors will attract a record number of visitors during the expo, which will run from May 1 to Oct. 31.

With its slogan "Better City -- Better Life," the expo in Shanghai is also expected to provide a helpful platform by showcasing expertise and practice to promote the living standards of nearly half of the world's population currently living in cities.

"We hope this expo can be a dialogue summit about cities, and each pavilion will lay out tradition as well as innovation to the future," Loscertales said.

"We also hope Shanghai citizens and each visitor can realize through the exhibition that urban planning and construction call for every citizen's participation. Furthermore, we hope all exchanges of experience, innovations and technologies can bring better life in the future," he added.

The BIE chief pointed to the fact that the host city of the World Expo 2010 is the most dynamic city in the world. Moreover, for the first time, the expo will be held in a developing country, so that the number of exhibitors from developing countries has already exceeded that of any previous expo thanks to the great attention China has been attaching to its developing peers.

Being both a 5,000-year civilization and a wellspring of modernization and innovation, the 2010 expo offers a notable contrast that can strongly impress visitors, the BIE chief observed.

Remarking on the impact of the global financial crisis, the BIE chief said he was pleased that there was no retreat from participation -- on the contrary, he had noticed active preparation by all participants for the coming event.

"I'm confident that the excellent content in the expo and highly-qualified architectures will make their mark in history As the first expo to provide a platform for experience exchanges, the Shanghai Expo will set an example for its successors," Loscertales said.

As the Shanghai Expo is entering its 100-day countdown, the BIE chief appealed to people around the world to make use of this opportunity to get to know a vigorous China.

"I hope they try to understand China, to know that the achievement China made today is not by accident, but a combined result of thousands of years' deposit of culture and tradition and the courageous effort of the Chinese people," he said.

"Chinese people's wisdom and enterprise maintain enormous scope for the country's future development.

"People, especially the youth, should know about this. They need to learn from Chinese

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culture, discover the extraordinary nation, which should also be one function of the expo," the BIE chief said.

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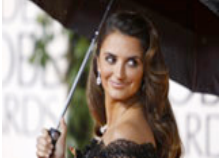
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