Shanghai, Closing of a Great Expo!

Special Edition n°4 Expo Shanghai

Extracts of the Closing Speech by Mr Jean-Pierre Lafon, President of the BIE, during the Closing Ceremony of Expo Shanghai 2010

“Expo 2010 Shanghai China is an astounding success for China. It is a success for the city of Shanghai; it is also a success for the World of Exhibitions: the BIE and its Member States.”

“Shanghai shows that with a talented organisation, a wish to succeed and an excellent international communication campaign, a World Expo always brings out a true fascination.”

“The theme of Shanghai Expo, “Better City, Better Life is more relevant now than ever for the whole planet and in particular for China, for all developing countries who are undergoing an uncontrolled increase of their cities’ populations and for developed countries who must renew their suburbs and neighbourhoods.”

“The light of the Shanghai World Expo will continue to shine long into the future.”
EXPO x EXPOS, the BIE Itinerary Exhibition,

built in the area A of the Expo Site of Shanghai among the International Pavilions, received more than 2 million visitors and had a very good coverage in the press.

The City of Liège, in Belgium, will host EXPO x EXPOS in Summer 2011.

Tribute to Gabriele

Words cannot express our shock, sadness and pain at losing one of our most dear colleagues, Gabriele Fasan. We mourn the loss of our friend. Gabriele was honorable, faithful, tender and cheerful. But our emotion and sorrow will not prevent us from forgetting our happiness at knowing him.

Gabriele contributed significantly to the success of “EXPO x EXPOS”, the BIE’s exhibition which traveled to cities all over the world. Through his work and kind nature, Gabriele was appreciated by all those who knew or met him.

His BIE’s colleagues pay him an affectionate tribute. Our thoughts will be always with him.

We offer our respect and our fond memories to Gabriele’s partner and family in the hope that it will help them to come to terms with their unbearable and incomprehensible loss.
On July 28th, 2010, the International Cosmos Prize Committee (Chairperson: Dr. Akito Arima) selected Dr. Estella B. Leopold, Professor Emeritus, University of Washington (83), as the winner of the 2010 (18th) International Cosmos Prize.

The decision to award the prize to Dr. Leopold was reached after considering the recommendations submitted by the International Cosmos Prize Screening Committee of Experts (Chairperson: Dr. Masahiro Kato).

Dr. Estella Leopold has made tremendous achievements by continuing and further developing the Land Ethic, which was initiated by her father, Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), as well as by disseminating the idea to many places in the United States. She is still pursuing activities that weave the Land Ethic into the fabric of people’s lives and society.

Dr. Estella Leopold was awarded a certificate of merit, a medallion, and a monetary prize of 40 million yen at the award ceremony held on October 14th, 2010.

The International Cosmos Prize was established in 1993 by Commemorative Foundation for Expo’90 Osaka, Japan, to carry on and further develop the idea of “The Harmonious Coexistence between Nature and Mankind” presented at the International garden and Greenery Exposition, or Expo’90, held in Osaka, Japan.

Website [http://wwwexpo-cosmos.orjepmenu_e.htm](http://wwwexpo-cosmos.orjepmenu_e.htm)
Friendship, respect, dialogue, generosity and passion. These are some of the words that come to mind to describe our experience with you to bring this amazing event to millions of people.

For over 160 years World Expos have helped humanity to make sense of change and to navigate through difficult times... Today, Shanghai 2010 is yet another milestone as cities and nations look for sustainable urban solutions and practices.

China has attributed a high strategic value to Shanghai 2010 since the beginning. In so doing, China has demonstrated a forward looking vision that had fully grasped the significance of the World Expo to foster sustainable economic growth and environmental management at the city, regional, national and international level.

Expo is certainly not a pre-packaged product. Expo offers a universal framework established around core values and practices that are designed to support progress, solidarity and education.

Shanghai 2010 has been a shining example of the ability of organisers and participants to create an event that is truly capable to fulfil some of the needs and expectations of the times. This conviction is the strongest legacy that Shanghai 2010 can leave to the BIE, especially as our organization prepares to celebrate its 60th Anniversary next year.

Expos are practices that cities and nations can engage in to promote education, innovation and cooperation for sustainable development, which today has been identified as the fundamental path to build better future societies.

In order to give to the BIE Day the multicultural character which is the essence of our organisation and to promote the Expo of Shanghai and the two coming Expos, the audience had the pleasure to assist a show integrated by China, Republic of Korea and Italy.
Awards Ceremony

Vicente González Loscertales, Secretary General of the BIE, and Hong Hao, Director General of the Bureau of Shanghai World Expo Coordination, attended the ceremony with about 300 UBPA pavilion staff.

“Yesterday, Premier Wen Jiabao in his speech said that “one day in the Expo is like reading for 10 years”. I wish to echo this with the UBPA and congratulate you for all you have been able to show and to teach with these very educational, yet festive displays,” said BIE Secretary General who added:

“You have created one of the most innovative and striking features of Expo 2010 and set the bar high for future Expos.

… Best practices must and will become more and more an integral part of Expos. We are looking forward to seeing your presence again, through other themes, in future Expos.”

The pavilions are grouped by categories according to their size.
On the 31st October, the Expo Shanghai 2010 Summit Forum on Urban Innovation and Sustainable Development was the conclusive intellectual achievement that accompanied the final celebrations of the 184 days World Expo.

The Summit Forum, co-hosted by the Shanghai World Expo organizing committee, the United Nations, and the BIE was the tip of the iceberg of a series of Expo forums that Shanghai 2010 has hosted around China before and during the Expo. These Forums have not only made a key contribution in advancing public understanding of the theme “Better City, Better Life,” but have provided a platforms for international organizations to establish a solid base for cooperation in Expos.

Participants at the Summit Forum included State leaders, high-level representatives of countries and major corporations, mayors, scientists, leading experts and entrepreneurs from each continent. Contributions included digital cities, knowledge innovation, eco-cities, economic development and balanced urban-rural relations, community management and youth creativity and were all aimed at sharing innovative approaches to sustainable urban development.

As the stage for announcing the Shanghai Declaration on Harmonious Cities, the Summit Forum represents the foundation for developing a legacy for the Expo theme. The words of Premier Wen Jiabao reinforced the importance of Expos as platforms for advance progress and education: “Expo 2010 Shanghai is an eye-opening event, showcasing the best material achievements of human civilizations. It will also leave behind a rich spiritual legacy and a constant source of inspiration. This is the soul of the Expo. Only when the fruits of human civilization are elevated onto the spiritual and philosophical level will they become the common assets of the entire humanity and be passed down from generation to generation. It is therefore highly relevant that we review this Expo and see what experience and inspiration we can draw from it.”

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon opening remarks at the Summit Forum highlighted the growing importance that Expos, through their themes, are playing to bring to a large public the key concerns and efforts carried out by the international community.

The BIE Secretary General, Mr. Vicente Gonzalez Loscertales, concluded the opening ceremony by reminding the audience that: “Expos are becoming key assets for governments and international organizations in their effort to communicate to the public the major issues at the top of their global agendas. They are new platforms for multilateral public diplomacy that help fill the existing awareness and knowledge gaps amongst citizens. As Shanghai 2010 has proven, in the 21st century, Expos are engines of change that strongly support the top-down policy efforts of governments and international organizations.”

While the Summit Forum was a success in itself in terms of visibility and high-level attendance, its greatest importance rests on the foundation of cooperation that it has established between the BIE, the United Nations and China. In the words of Mr. Locertales “It has been a successful experience that has highlighted important synergies that can only strengthen the educational impact of future Expos amongst citizens as well as local and global leaders alike.”
WE, participants and friends from all reaches of the globe, drawn by the theme “Better City, Better Life,” have gathered in Shanghai and jointly fashioned the first World Expo in a developing country organized under the auspices of the Bureau International des Expositions. During these 184 days, we have explored, envisioned and simulated the mosaic of urban life through the wonderful exhibitions of the pavilions, the in-depth intellectual exchanges in the forums and the brilliant cultural events.

WE have come to realize that people’s understanding and pursuit of a better life are both the foundations and the engines of urban development.

WE are also convinced that it is necessary to re-examine the relationship between people, cities and our planet.

WE agree that, in tackling the challenges of urban development, innovation offers solutions and the concept of “Cities of Harmony” embodies our dreams.

At present, with more than half of humankind living in cities, our planet has entered the urban age. Rapid urbanization and industrialization have offered to humanity the abundant fruits of modern civilization, but at the same time they have brought unprecedented challenges. Population explosion, traffic congestion, environmental pollution, resource shortages, urban poverty and cultural conflicts are becoming urban problems with a global scope.

For historical and current reasons, these phenomena are especially prominent in many developing countries. The Shanghai Expo responded to the times by selecting cities as its theme. It also introduced the first-ever Urban Best Practices Area and Virtual Expo to pursue a ground-breaking exploration of the possible solutions to the common dilemmas faced by humankind.

Today, as this grand gathering comes to a close, we sing high praise for the important value of the World Expo as a platform to confront these challenges and as a vehicle for dynamic exchange and interaction between civilizations. We enthusiastically issue this Shanghai Declaration as a summary of the substantive achievements of the Shanghai Expo and an expression of the shared aspirations of people around the world for a “Better City, Better Life.”

WE aspire to build cities that establish harmony between diverse people, between development and environment, between cultural legacies and future innovations. A City of Harmony reveals itself when people are in harmony with nature, society, and themselves, and when there is harmony between generations.

To this end, we join together in proposing:

**To Establish an Ecological Civilization Oriented toward the Future**
Cities should respect nature, consider the urban ecological environment as an asset, integrate environmental issues into urban planning and administration, and accelerate the transition to sustainable development. They should promote the use of renewable energy sources and build low-carbon eco-cities. They should strongly advocate for conservation of resources and promote environment-friendly manufacturing. Cities and their citizens should join together to create sustainable lifestyles and an ecological civilization in which people and environment co-exist in harmony.

**To Pursue Inclusive and Balanced Growth**
Cities should balance economic growth and social development; seek to achieve an optimal relationship between social equity and economic efficiency; strive to create an institutional environment of shared rights and interests, equal opportunity, and fair competition, and work to reduce inequalities in income. They should enable all residents to share the fruits of urban development and fully realize their personal growth.

**To Promote Scientific and Technological Innovation as a Path to Development**
Cities should strengthen scientific research and technological innovation, as well as establish and improve systems for using new technologies. They should accelerate the application of scientific findings in order to improve the quality of people’s lives and create new industries and jobs. They should leverage scientific research and technological innovation to build up the capacity of cities to prevent and mitigate urban and natural disasters. They should apply principles of openness and mutual benefit in strengthening scientific and technological exchanges and collaboration to promote urban development around the world.

**To Build a Smart and Accessible Information Society**
Cities should recognize that information and communication technologies are essential to a vibrant social, economic and cultural life of the city. Cities should invest in information and communication technology infrastructure so as to strengthen services across multiple sectors, and to build an intelligent digital nervous system supporting urban operations. They should strengthen the use of information technology in education, reduce the digital divide, and increase the access of residents to information.

**To Foster an Open and Sharing Multicultural Society**
Cities should endeavor to protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage and encourage the development of multicultural Society. Like the ocean that embraces all rivers, cities should keep an open spirit and actively engage in intercultural exchanges and interactions. Cities should pursue cultural innovation based on respect for cultural traditions and the preservation of cultural diversity, so as to generate lasting momentum for urban and human development.

**To Build Friendly and Liveable Communities**
Cities should promote a harmonious and friendly social environment, and build civil, safe and liveable urban neighbourhoods through rational planning. They should provide high-quality public services in employment, healthcare, education, housing, social welfare and other areas. They should encourage public participation in urban planning and governance, take into consideration the practical and psychological needs of migrants to the cities, and eliminate social barriers and conflicts.

**To Pursue Balanced Urban-Rural Development**
Cities should coordinate balanced development with rural regions through the provision of services and infrastructure. Cities should strive to reduce the urban-rural gap, take into consideration the interests of disadvantaged social groups. More efforts should be taken to improve and optimize urban-rural linkages as well as regional networks. Cities should actively initiate urban-rural dialogue to achieve harmony in their interactions.

**WE THEREFORE** call upon the world to pursue the efforts we have undertaken in the Shanghai Expo: to promote sustainable urban development, to foster cooperation and exchanges among cities and regions, and to share experiences and lessons in urbanization.

WE propose to undertake initiatives for knowledge sharing and capacity building for cities around the world as they tackle the economic, social and environmental challenges of the 21st century. One such initiative will create educational materials for future city planners and managers by compiling the intellectual contributions of the Shanghai Expo.

WE propose that October 31st, the day of the closing ceremony of World Expo 2010 Shanghai China, should be nominated as World Better Cities Day. It should be recalled, renewed and advanced in the future, inspiring humankind in its enduring pursuit of urban innovation and harmonious development!