

The Water Tribune:

A Legacy for Equitable Water Reflecting the Commitment to the Environment

The Water Tribune of Expo Zaragoza 2008 is a place for thought, reflection, dialogue, debate, consensus, proposals, lessons learnt, experiences and recommendations open to those wishing to participate and to contribute to a major world debate on the emerging values in the area of water, its management, sustainability and innovation.

When dialogue is promoted, experiences are exchanged and practical cases are shared, mechanisms of cooperation between countries are also developed - in this case, the relations between Spain and the countries that have not yet reached the minimum level of development.

The fight against poverty is one of the fundamental objectives of Spanish international cooperation policy for development, within the global action framework based on the Millennium Development Goals. Spain, together with the other countries that subscribe to this common methodology in the fight for a more equitable world, is committed to expanding universal public education, to encouraging equal opportunities between genders, to stimulating favourable conditions for health and to guaranteeing environmental sustainability.

- Water for Life : Health, Quality of the Water and of the Environment or Water and Sanitation.
- Water and Society : Education and Culture.
- Water and Cities : Models for Sustainable Management.

These are some of the themes that will give content to the debates and to the exchange of experiences and knowledge during the nine Thematic Weeks.

This blending of all these voices, which serve as propositions and gathered after 93 days of intense work, will be intended to fulfil an obligation to the most vulnerable.

Equitable water, water meaning commitment, clear water, water meaning peace, sustainable water.

The Water Tribune says YES. This will remain in writing in the legacy of Expo Zaragoza 2008.

Eduardo Mestre
Water Tribune Director
Expo Zaragoza 2008



Croatia and Expo 2008 Zaragoza: "A Drop of Water, a Grain of Salt"



On 7 December, at the Gliptoteka of Zagreb, Croatia officially presented its pavilion for Expo 2008 Zaragoza.

The event gathered high officials from the BIE, EXPO Zaragoza and the city of Zaragoza as well as numerous actors from

the political, economic, and cultural life of Croatia, ambassadors from several countries (China, Spain, France, Japan, Portugal, among others), and the press.

"A drop of Water, a Grain of Salt" is the theme of Croatian pavilion for EXPO 2008. The designers and architects presented the project, which is not a reproduction of the Croatian pavilion of Expo Aichi but an expression of continuity from the theme of "Nature's Wisdom" to the theme of "Water and Sustainable Development".



On February 4th, the Travelling Expo, "Expo x Expos", opened at the Triennale di Milano in Milan, Italy.

It marked the opening of the first large-scale exhibition coordinated by the BIE designed to promote both the organisation itself and the Expos. "Expo x Expos" will make stops in Madrid, Lisbon, Zaragoza, Brussels, Paris, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Nagoya, Osaka, and London, home to the first Expo in 1851, before passing the baton to Shanghai, host of World Expo 2010.

Progression

The BIE Newsletter

EXPOS AND COOPERATION

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Cooperation: a Pillar of Zaragoza 2008

Spain has assumed the challenge of putting the instrument of an International Exhibition to the service of what is considered one of the largest challenges of the 21st century: spreading the need for a new culture in the management of Water and Sustainable Development, insofar as these concepts would bring appropriate answers to the challenges of Climate Change.

The Exhibition wants to highlight the urgency with which the world, and specially developed countries, should cooperate with some regions of the planet, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, so that water, today a transmitter of disease and death, is turned into a safe source of life and a motor for poverty eradication.

Zaragoza 2008 wants to promote the creation and extension of global networks of early warning to prevent or alleviate the effects of extreme climatic phenomena and the exchange of experiences of best practices in the management of shared waters and basins. All around the world there are examples of successes and failures in this matter in which there is no unique model, but all of us have something to learn.

Environmental and Development Cooperation dimensions are, together with the Economic and Technological side of Water and Sustainable Development, the three pillars of Zaragoza 2008. We know that economic activities tied to sustainable development are already an area of activity with great capacity for growth.

All these ideas will be performed in Zaragoza Expo through the pavilions, but we will also count on the Water Tribune, a new instrument that wants to be the forum for debate on these matters.



Expo Zaragoza 2008, the Agricultural Ministers of the Mediterranean Countries in front of the Water Tower under construction.

Important Dates

- 14 April** : Expo Shanghai Online, Working Meeting, Paris
- 14 June** : Expo Zaragoza 2008 - Opening of Zaragoza 2008
- 11 September** : 6th Shanghai Forum , Zaragoza
- 12 September** : 3rd General Assembly of AVE, Zaragoza
- 13 September** : BIE Day at Zaragoza 2008
- 14 September** : Closing Ceremony of Zaragoza 2008



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Emilio Fernández-Castaño
General Commissioner
Expo Zaragoza 2008



Expos, Cooperation, Solidarity, Complementarity and Latin America

International cooperation allows an integration in the relations between states of a component that surpasses the politico-strategic and economic aspect, all the while leaving room for solidarity, independence, promotion, and research to share a common international ground.

It is in this sense that Expos have transformed themselves into veritable challenges for cities, regions, and countries, whose candidacy direct attention to them and whose Expos are a factor of social, economic, and cultural stimulation for those who organize them as well as for those who participate in them. The presence of Latin America has always been active and significant in International and World Expos.

Yet, Latin America has never hosted any event of this nature. It is thus the moment to be ready in anticipation of the future; we have solid democratic governments in full transformation, important economies in full bloom, an immense cultural diversity and identity, and a popular participation that takes up, every day, more and more space in the public opinions and actions.

Considering the major importance of Expos and their contribution to development, promotion, cooperation, research, and to education, among other domains of interest, the peoples of Latin America will have to, in the years to come, take up an important challenge.



The Venezuela Flower Pavilion at Hanover 2000

Ambassador Jesús Arnaldo Pérez
Delegate to the BIE
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The Participation to Expos is a Factor of International Cooperation

At present, international cooperation signifies, in a broad sense, cooperation at the global and regional level.

This translates itself in several domains of life, such as the economy, the sciences and technology, politics, diplomacy, culture, communication, etc. The world and international exhibitions (Expos) supported by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) justify this reality.

Every 5 years, the member states of the BIE as well as the international community participate, and are witnesses to, a World Expo. This was the case at the World Expo organized in Aichi, Japan, between March and September, 2005, titled "Nature's Wisdom." Between World Expos, there are the International Expos under special themes such as the Royal Flora Ratchaphruek Expo in Thailand, that took place between November, 2006 to January, 2007, and the Expo under the theme, "Water and Sustainable Development" in Spain, between June and September of this year in 2008. These Expos are solid and attractive meeting points for the participants, who are a country, an international or civil association, a citizen, etc.

World and International Expos are places where the participants can exchange ideas and learn in several domains in order to enlighten our sustainable, more modern and harmonious society.

With this spirit, the active participation to Expos from each one of us contributes to the work of international cooperation, dynamic and fruitful cooperation.

Nguyen Van Tinh
Director - Department of International Cooperation
Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism
BIE Delegate of Vietnam

Expos: the 21st Century Champions of International Cooperation

At the dawn of the 21st century, with our planet undergoing drastic transformations and our changing geopolitical reality, we are at a point in history when, more than ever, unity and cooperation across states are essential to confront the challenges that our world is facing.

Yet, when we look around, what we see is a world that is too often divided. And this is why Expos today prove themselves so valuable: Expos have, from their first appearance onto the world stage in 1851 in London, always been instruments, platforms, and products of international cooperation. Within this non-confrontational framework of collaboration that is the hallmark of Expos, international cooperation and public diplomacy are married and reinforced. From the selection of the host city to the preparatory stage to the opening of the Expo and then to the post-Expo stage, every phase of a successful Expo requires close cooperation among the BIE, Expo organizers, and the participants.

Today, with the number of BIE member states reaching 141 and the opening of Expo Zaragoza 2008 only months away, this is a particularly important moment when we need the closest international cooperation to bring us together.

This is why, for this issue of Progression, we hope you will enjoy reading about Expos and international cooperation, as seen from various perspectives.

Vicente González Loscertales
Secretary General of the BIE



The Community around the BIE: framework for International Cooperation

Africa can Teach a lot to the World

The general concept of the Shanghai Expo (the harmonious city) and its theme « Better City, Better Life » echo the concerns of contemporary society: between now and 2015, more than half of the population will live in cities.

Extraordinary urban changes are taking place and will continue to do so in the Southern Hemisphere and especially in Africa, which will be in the forefront of participation with 45 countries having accepted to be present at the World Expo.

According to the latest projections of the United Nations Population Fund, the African urban population will go from 294 million people in 2000 to 742 million in 2030.

Today, 72 % of this urban population lives in shantytowns. What will happen tomorrow? Confronted with these urgent matters, how can African society achieve the different requirements of sustainable development?



Faced with the challenge of inventing every day new solutions to live and to develop, African cities are in constant motion. They create, innovate and adapt to the best of their ability to a globalized world from which they do not want to be excluded.

Ironically, the fact that Africa is lagging behind in certain domains may prove to be an opportunity. Confronted with the need to preserve resources or with the high price of imported materials, Africa must constantly devise innovative and modern solutions for daily problems in terms of communication or the construction of housing. While the overfed West rediscovers the virtues of frugality to face the threats of climate change and pollution, Africa could very well have an advantage in certain domains, and be in a position, this time, to teach lessons after having received so many.

For its massive public and media exposure, the Expo will be a historic opportunity to show the heritage of Africa and, at the same time, its capacity to fully be a part of a global society, of which Shanghai today is one of the most spectacular symbols. In 2010, Africa is headed to meet the world.

Valérie Terranova
Shanghai Expo 2010 Consultant

Integrating Less Developed Countries in Expos

The 142nd BIE General Assembly gathered 140 member states, 42 of whom were new, which allowed the organisation to move closer to its ideal of universality that is implicitly inscribed in its founding charter.

The number of African states, to which the international movement of Expos has opened its borders, is now 27, or half of the countries of the continent. What can they expect from an organisation whose principal goal is to educate the public on the means created by the human genius in order to ensure the satisfaction of its needs?

The members of the BIE can benefit from the Expos in two ways: either by organizing the international exhibitions which, among other things, allow them to carry out projects of regional development or urban redevelopment, to offer their people a unique educational experience, and to benefit from significant economic and financial gains; or by promoting their national image, their culture, or their technological and scientific skills at the exhibitions in which they are participants.

The economic conditions of the African member countries, of which most belong to the category of LDC, the inadequacy of their physical infrastructures and the absence of a significant base of financially solid local enterprises mean that very few among them can aspire to organize an international exhibition. The same economic reasons limit the number of citizens in these countries with the means to visit Expos organised in other continents. The educational character of Expos thus rests inaccessible to the large majority of the African public.

This means that African states can only officially participate in Expos organized elsewhere. Even if this is facilitated by a consensual aid to the LDC's, it would still cause problems in certain cases, considering the level of sophistication of modern Expos. Today, an active participation demands, on one hand, a census of policies and the resources available related to the chosen theme, and, on the other hand, a mobilization of actors and resources around the common project. This requires resources—not only financial— which are not always accessible at crucial points of Expos in the member states.

There exists room for intervention for cooperation in favor of LDC's, more ambitious than that which is established between the Commissioner- General of an Expo and the Commissioners of section. It could be invested in by the creation at the BIE of a technical assistance unit, charged with supporting the LDC's in identifying their resources linked to the theme of an Expo, evaluating their needs, preparing an itinerary and mobilizing the expected resources in order to aid the LDC's. The unit would be led by an adviser, assisted by an expert dispatched each time by the organising country of the Expo in preparation.

Such a solution would be beneficial both for the organisers, who would register quality participation rather than symbolic; for the developing countries, who would benefit just as much from the preparation process as from the educational experience acquired during the Expo; and for the BIE Secretariat, who would find in it an effective means of integrating the LDC's in the international movement of Expos.



Boubacar BA
BIE Delegate of Senegal

