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Media Release

Swiss Pavilion opens at Shanghai Expo

30.04.2010

The Swiss Pavilion in at the Shanghai Expo – the largest Expo to date - opened its doors today. As part of its strategy of communication abroad, Switzerland will be presenting itself in an open and inter-active pavilion covering 4,000 square metres. The chosen topic – Rural-Urban Interaction – is dealt with in a playful manner. The organisers expect 2.5 million visitors in the coming months.

The World Expo that opened in Shanghai today covers an area of over 5 square kilometres and is expected to pull in 70 million visitors. Switzerland's communicative pavilion covers an area of 4,000 square metres. The project is managed by Presence Switzerland and was designed by ARGE Buchner Bründler Architects and element design GmbH. Thousands of people flocked to the Swiss Pavilion on the first day.

The Swiss Pavilion deals playfully with the subject of Rural-Urban Interaction. The building is an open hybrid structure exemplifying both technology and nature, containing both the town and the country and keeping them both in balance. It is covered by a semi-transparent curtain of woven metal netting made up of 10,000 cells that generate electricity using state-of-the-art solar technology and illustrating the creative force of the sun's rays.

Inside this exhibition visitors meet twelve Swiss men and women who stand in front of a huge IMAX-projection with a Swiss mountain scape and tell the audience about life in Switzerland. 50 telescopes give a three-dimensional view of specific Swiss projects in the fields of air and water quality, sustainable building and mobility. At the end a chair lift takes visitors to the roof of the pavilion which is brimming with greenery and symbolises the interaction between town and country.

The presentation at Expo 2010 Shanghai is an invaluable platform for Swiss communication abroad. It strengthens Switzerland's image in China in the long term and helps both to cultivate existing relationships and to establish new ones. Various Swiss companies are using this platform to present themselves as sponsors to the Chinese market with its huge future potential.

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Presence Switzerland is part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and is responsible for the Confederation's communication abroad. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (Presence Switzerland) implements the goals of Swiss communication abroad by means of projects, invitations to foreign media workers and decision-makers, the development and dissemination of information about Switzerland abroad and major events such as Expos and Olympic Games.

World expositions are representative, international platforms that are hugely important not only in political and economic terms but also in scientific and cultural terms. They provide an opportunity to disseminate knowledge and to establish and cultivate networks. They serve to create and to foster the national image abroad.

On 29 March 2006 the Swiss Federal Council gave the go-ahead for Switzerland's participation in EXPO 2010 Shanghai. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (Presence Switzerland) was mandate to manage the project. In addition to its activities in the Swiss Pavilion at EXPO 2010 in Shanghai and in the House of Switzerland at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (Presence Switzerland) supports the inter-disciplinary communication programme 2007 – 2011 which is run by the FDFA (Presence Switzerland). Its aim is to promote Switzerland's positioning in China.

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Last modification: 28.04.2010

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