

No. 02 / Dubai, 28th February 2018**Important step towards Dubai:****Germany signs Expo 2020 participation contract**

With the World Expo in Dubai exactly 31 months, 2 weeks and 6 days away, the Federal Republic of Germany has taken an important, official step towards Expo 2020 Dubai by signing a participation contract. The contract also specifies the precise location of the German Pavilion on the 430-hectare Expo site. It was signed by Najeeb Mohammed Al-Ali, Executive Director, Dubai Expo 2020 Bureau, and Dietmar Schmitz, Commissioner General of the German Pavilion, for Germany.

Schmitz called it “an important day and a great honour”, adding “Germany has officially sealed its commitment to participate in the upcoming World Expo”. As Head of the “Policy on fairs and exhibitions, expo participations” division at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Schmitz has long served as the official representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for the country’s World Expo pavilions. The next Expo will run from 20 October 2020 until 10 April 2021 in Dubai (United Arab Emirates) - the first in the region.

The organisers have chosen “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future” as the Expo theme. According to the Commissioner General, “It reflects the true spirit of World Expos. They bring countries and organisations together for a set period to discuss the most pressing issues facing our world and to consider solutions - together - with the joint aim of pointing the way forward.” Schmitz remains a firm believer in the World Expo concept. “Even in our digital age, it is still our human nature to want to meet other people in person, face to face, and to experience things ourselves in order to form our own opinions. Expos bring the world together.”

The Expo site will be divided into three zones in line with the three subthemes the organisers have chosen for participants to focus on: “Opportunity”, “Mobility” and “Sustainability”. Germany has opted for the latter - a natural choice, according to Schmitz. “Sustainability has long since been mainstreamed into society, policymaking, business and research. Yet, there is, of course, still much to be done. We will not be able to do it all ourselves. World Expos offer the ideal framework for the countries of the world to ‘connect minds’ to tackle the problems facing our planet.”

Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation and Director General, Dubai Expo 2020 Bureau, said: “The UAE and Germany share a vision of a cleaner, more sustainable future - something that is a key focus of Expo 2020 Dubai - and we are delighted that our close friends have become the latest nation to sign an official participation contract. Germany has long set a strong

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example to the rest of the **world of the need to remember that our planet's resources are finite and need to be cherished and preserved.**"

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The signed contract also specifies which plot the German Pavilion will be built on over the next two and a half years. Measuring 4,500 square metres, it is one of the largest. It is located in a prominent position on the main thoroughfare, a circular path connecting the various themes. The plot offers a direct view of the host **country's pavilion, for which** the United Arab Emirates has chosen Santiago Calatrava as the architect. Calling the location chosen for the German Pavilion by the **organisers a "superb spot", Schmitz added, "We are very much aware of the responsibility and expectations that this plot brings with it."**

50 million euros has been set aside for the pavilion in Germany's federal budget.

This will cover the costs of the entire project: preparations (which got underway last year in Cologne and Dubai with Koelnmesse at the helm on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy), planning, construction, pavilion operations, press and public relations work but also the cultural programme and, when the Expo is over, the dismantling of the pavilion.

The tendering process for the pavilion concept is underway, with bids invited for a pavilion that tells a story and incorporates the Expo theme into its exhibition and architecture. A pavilion that appeals to young and old alike, is entertaining and interactive and full of fascinating information from Germany on the subject of sustainability. This is the approach that the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy has followed in all World Expos since 2005 - and it has proved extremely successful. Not only were all six pavilions since then crowd pullers with long **entrance queues, they also received a number of awards. "That success both motivates and compels us to follow up with a pavilion in Dubai that again enthral, educates and entertains - and provides an unforgettable experience," says Schmitz,** explaining what he will be looking for in the new pavilion.

The Expo 2020 Dubai expects to record 25 million visits in the six months of the Expo, with an estimated 70% coming from overseas. To date, 170 countries have already confirmed their participation; Germany has now made its participation official. In September, Commissioner General Schmitz will travel to Dubai again for a press conference to present the pavilion concept.