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United Nations Pavilion, Expo 2010
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Statement by the UN Commissioner General, Expo 2010 Dr. Awni Behnam on the occasion of the visit of the Mayor of Shanghai H.E. Han Zheng to Geneva, 6 June 2009

Honorable Mayor Han Zheng Mayor of Shanghai

Excellency Ambassador Li Baodong

Mr. Hong Hao , Deputy Secretary General of Shanghai Municipal Government .

Distinguished guests

Let me first say how honored we all are for your presence Mr. Mayor with us this evening and how grateful we are for the unparalleled support that you have extended to the United Nations and other International Organizations participating in EXPO 2010.

As the Commissioner-General for the UN Pavilion and on behalf of the Secretary General Mr. BAN Ki -moon I wish to express our deep appreciation for this opportunity to meet you all and extend to you the welcoming hand of the United Nations Pavilion at Expo 2010.

The theme of the EXPO 2010 is *Better City, Better Life* and as such it could not be held in a better city than Shanghai, a truly magical city, forever changing to the better. Thanks to you Mr. Mayor and the Municipal Government of Shanghai, the city has become a unique and shining example of how to meet the challenges of urbanization, rejuvenation, modernization and above all, how to evolve into a city that caters for the happiness of people, and the betterment of their life.

From my vantage view and engagement in the EXPO 2010, I can in all honesty say that I am convinced there never has been, nor will ever be an Expo comparable to EXPO 2010 . From what I have witnessed it will be the EXPO of our time.

The expo was aptly described as the Olympics of Development, as it will provide a unique opportunity to seek answers to the challenges of urbanization and climate change where cities are also engines of growth and economic and social inclusion with a healthy respect for the environment. It will expand our horizon and understanding of how future cities can mitigate natural disasters, deal with health pandemics, yet remain as centers of creativity, education, culture, harmony and centers for *decent work for all*.

I am convinced that the EXPO 2010 will engage every one of us here and offers the United Nations System, Funds, Programmers, International Organizations and Partner's access to convey their own contribution to some seventy million visitors and another billion of online visitors.

The UN Pavilion will be an experience one that offers a permanent exposition, a rolling one, and facilities for meetings with people to people interaction including a Roman-style theatre among many other opportunities that will be available to the participants.

The UN Secretary-General in encouraging all agencies, international organizations and partners to participate in EXPO 2010 said:

“The United Nations Pavilion at Expo 2010, with the theme “One Earth, One UN”, will showcase the wide-ranging efforts of the UN system to help the world to achieve sustainable urban development. The exhibitions will display not only our knowledge and best practices, but also our unity of purpose advancing this crucially important agenda.”

Let me close by again reiterating our deep appreciation and gratitude to You Mr. Mayor personally, to the City of Shanghai and to the People and Government of the Peoples’s Republic of China for your unlimited generosity and support to the United Nations and international organizations.

Thank you