

## **Hamburg Messe und Congress wins contract for German pavilion at World EXPO 2008 in Zaragoza**

### **HMC to organise German delegation at an EXPO for the first time**

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Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH (HMC) is to organise the German contribution to the World Expo 2008 in Zaragoza, Spain. Award of the contract has now been announced by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi). The Ministry is giving HMC responsibility from 2 October 2006 onwards for the technical and organisational work for the German Pavilion at the EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008.

The World Expo in the city of Zaragoza (normally called "Saragossa" in English), Northern Spain, is to run from 14 June to 14 September 2008. Its focus is on "Water and Sustainable Development" and, like the Expo in Lisbon (Portugal) 1998 and Aichi (Japan) 2005, it is a "thematic" world expo. The EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008 is organised by International Exhibitions Bureau (B.I.E.), based in Paris. The German Pavilion in Zaragoza will be about 1,200 square metres.

This is the first time that HMC put in a bid to organise a German participation, and it has won the contract in competition with a number of major German convention centres. "This is a very important step forward for our company," said Bernd Aufderheide, Managing Director of HMC. "We are delighted at the trust which the Ministry has placed in us, and will live up to these expectations."

HMC as the implementing company will launch a tender procedure for an ideas competition for the content of the German Pavilion; the decision will be made by a panel of judges to be nominated by the Economics and Technology Ministry. Other responsibilities of HMC will include coordination of the accompanying cultural programme during the EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008 and organisation and implementation of the German National Day. The first step is the establishment of an EXPO Office, which will start work in Hamburg at the beginning of October.

Responsibility for the EXPO project at HMC lies with the International Department under Pascal C. Thirion, who comments "I see the decision by the Ministry as recognition of our successful work over the past years". In 2005 alone, HMC organised more than 25 joint delegations at industry and trade fairs abroad.

All in all, more than 600 companies from the whole of Germany made use of the services of HMC for presentations at trade fairs abroad in recent years. In 2007, HMC's projects for German companies abroad under contract for the Ministry will include the German delegation at the Arab

Health in Dubai. There will be more than 300 exhibitors there on 3,600 square metres of exhibition space, presenting their products and services from the health care and medical technology sectors.

Organisation of the German participation at a World EXPO is an expansion of HMC's international activities. This new challenge is viewed with optimism by HMC Managing Director Bernd Aufderheide, particularly in terms of the EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008 slogan "Water and Sustainable Development". "After all," he remarked, "water is very much a home issue for Hamburg, in all its many aspects – as a resource, as the basis for life, and also as a potential threat in the form of flooding".

In keeping with the key thematic focus, the 25 hectare EXPO site will be set up on the banks of Spain's largest river, the Ebro – Zaragoza is located in the middle reaches of the river. The landmark of the EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008 will be a new water tower. Key themes associated with water include "Water, basis of life", "Water, an element linking peoples", "Water, a scarce resource" and "Water and energy". These will be featured at central positions and routes on the EXPO site. The problems and challenges of worldwide water supply will be treated in an international discussion forum.

Zaragoza is the fifth largest city in Spain, with a population of some 650,000 people. It is the major city of the autonomous region of Aragon and the capital of the Province of Zaragoza. This is the first time that Zaragoza is hosting a world exhibition. There will be up to 100 nations participating at the EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008, plus numerous international organisations. More than six million visitors are expected from all parts of the world.

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