



إكسبو 2020  
دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

For Immediate Release  
18 March 2020

## Press Release

# Expo 2020 Dubai Participants express unity and solidarity in face of global COVID-19 pandemic

- Expo 2020 hosts virtual meeting of participants Steering Committee to discuss impact of COVID-19
- Countries share updates on construction and operational planning

Images: <https://expo2020dubai.sharefile.com/d-s184a904208b4a908>

**DUBAI, 18 March 2020** – Expo 2020 Dubai convened today a virtual Steering Committee meeting of representatives of the countries taking part in Expo 2020 Dubai to consult on the impact that COVID-19 is having on their preparations for Expo 2020 Dubai, which is due to open in October this year.

**Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation and Director General, Expo 2020 Dubai** said: “As hosts of the next World Expo, due to open in seven months’ time, we always knew that 2020 was going to be demanding. What we could not predict is that we would be doing so in the midst of the biggest global health crisis in generations. These are difficult, uncertain times, which makes it even more heartening to see communities around the world facing this challenge together and to witness the incredible resilience of the human spirit against a menace that does not recognise international borders or timelines. World Expos are intended to be celebrations of our collective endeavour and achievement as humanity, and these times call for our solidarity and unity more than ever.

“This discussion with participants today was an opportunity to reassure them on the measures that we have put into place in the UAE, to listen to their issues, and to look for ways that we can provide tangible, meaningful support at this difficult time, in the spirit of openness, collaboration and partnership that are at the heart of Expo 2020 Dubai. Our immediate priority is the health and well-being of everyone involved in Expo 2020 Dubai, and this will not be compromised. Our monitoring of ongoing developments means we will take all sensible precautions to manage and mitigate risk to all those involved.”

The UAE has taken a range of robust, precautionary measures to control the spread of COVID-19, and Expo 2020 has fully applied the latest guidance from the Dubai Health Authority, the Ministry of Health and Prevention, the World

PO Box 2020, Dubai | United Arab Emirates | T +971 (0)4 555 2020 | F +971 (0)4 555 2121  
expo2020dubai.com @Expo2020Dubai

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Health Organization and other relevant bodies. In addition to this, Expo 2020 Dubai is closely monitoring ongoing developments and has committed to adjusting planned preparations, as changing circumstances require.

**Dimitri Kerkentzes, Secretary General of the BIE** welcomed Expo 2020 Dubai's initiative. "The gravity of the situation and the impact that it is having in countries around the world cannot be ignored. World Expos are inherently global and inclusive events. For almost 170 years they have brought countries and people together to celebrate the best of humanity, and the fruits of our innovation and collaboration, around a theme addressing global challenges. Putting on a World Expo, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic requires a global effort from the 192 countries taking part in Expo 2020 Dubai. We continue working with the organisers and are confident in the steps that the UAE has taken to manage the spread of the virus and protect all those involved in the Expo. Expo 2020 Dubai's pragmatic approach offers both reassurance and assistance to those who need it, and will, I believe, contribute to the successful delivery of this mega event."

**Manuel Salchli, Chairman of the Steering Committee, Commissioner General of Switzerland**, said: "Today we held a virtual meeting with Expo Organisers to discuss the impact of COVID-19. From a construction perspective, all countries are committed to finalising their pavilions on site and will work in close coordination with Expo as they continue their dialogue in the coming weeks and adjust to the changing environment. Never before has the importance of human solidarity and human connectivity been as critical. We are all in this together and are steadfast in delivering an exceptional Expo in the UAE and for the world."

The group will reconvene in the coming weeks to re-assess the situation and plan accordingly. Work continues at Expo 2020 Dubai, where Expo-led construction is complete, and International Participant Pavilions are being completed. Detailed operation plans are being finalized ahead of a series of tests scheduled for later this year.

- ENDS-

### About Expo 2020 Dubai

Expo 2020 Dubai will bring together millions of people for The World's Greatest Show, celebrating human brilliance and achievement under the theme '*Connecting Minds, Creating the Future*'.

- The six months from 20 October 2020 to 10 April 2021 will be a moment in time to be part of an unparalleled event. We are extending a warm Emirati welcome to the world:
  - 25 million visits are expected, with many visitors expected to come more than once
  - 70 per cent of visitors anticipated to come from outside the UAE, the largest proportion of international visitors in the 169-year history of World Expos
- An entertaining global celebration with something for everyone, Expo 2020 will wow visitors with 60 daily events across 173 days, showcasing the best of music, technology, creativity and culture, while 200 F&B outlets will feature famous chefs and cuisine from every corner of the world
- Expo 2020 will be an endless journey of discovery. Visitors will have access to the latest innovations and breakthroughs, with more than 200 participants – including 192 nations, multilateral organisations, businesses and educational institutions – coming together to highlight real-life solutions to the world's most pressing challenges
- Expo 2020's sub-themes of *Opportunity*, *Mobility* and *Sustainability* will inspire visitors to make a conscious effort to think and live differently, and give them renewed optimism that, through collaboration, it is possible to make a lasting change to the world

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- The first World Expo to take place in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) will be located on a 4.38 sqkm site adjacent to Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai South

#### **Media Accreditation and Media Information System, Tawassul**

Expressions of interest for Expo 2020 Media Accreditation are still open via the Media Information System, Tawassul.

Tawassul is regularly updated, providing the latest content assets, including press releases, photographs, audio and video, the electronic media kit, and information on broadcast and photography operations. It also provides you with important information and updates on facilities and services such as media accreditation, relevant visa information for international accredited media and permits.

To kick off your journey with Expo 2020, please ensure that you:

1. Register to access Tawassul at <https://media.expo2020dubai.com>.
2. Once registered, submit an Expo 2020 Media Accreditation expression of interest. To attend Expo 2020 or cover Expo 2020 remotely using content and assets generated by Expo, you must be accredited.

For support, contact Expo 2020 Dubai's Media Operations team at [media.services@expo2020.ae](mailto:media.services@expo2020.ae) or +971 56 689 2101.

Visit: [www.expo2020dubai.com](http://www.expo2020dubai.com)

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#### **About World Expos**

In 1851 the Crystal Palace was the centrepiece of London's Great Exhibition – the first World Expo. It celebrated the man-made industrial wonders of a rapidly changing world. Architecture, contents and a theme, 'Industry of All Nations', were combined to create a big idea of nations meeting nations in shared technological and commercial progress. In more recent years, participants in World Expos, including governments, international organisations and companies, have gathered to find solutions to universal challenges and to promote their achievements, products, ideas, innovations, their national brand, and their nations as destinations for tourism, trade and investment.

World Expos are held under the auspices of the [Bureau International des Expositions \(BIE\)](http://www.bie.paris.fr), the intergovernmental organisation responsible for overseeing and regulating international exhibitions ('Expos') and for fostering their core values of Education, Innovation and Cooperation. Today, four types of Expos are organised under the BIE's auspices: World Expos, Specialised Expos, Horticultural Expos and the Triennale di Milano.

#### **For media enquiries, please contact:**

Press Office

On call contact

Email: [press.office@expo2020.ae](mailto:press.office@expo2020.ae)

Tel: +971 56 688 9509

P.O. Box 2020, Dubai, UAE

Rania Moussly | Nora Feidi

ASDA'A BCW

[rania.moussly@bcw-global.com](mailto:rania.moussly@bcw-global.com) | [nora.feidi@bcw-global.com](mailto:nora.feidi@bcw-global.com)

+971 50 5670377 | +971 50 1441243

Dubai Media City, Dubai, UAE

PO Box 2020, Dubai | United Arab Emirates | T +971 (0)4 555 2020 | F +971 (0)4 555 2121

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