

**PICTURE EXHIBITION OPENING:
“LOOKING FORWARD TO WORLD EXPO 2010, SHANGHAI, CHINA”**

Monday, 6 October 2008, 6:30 p.m.

South Lobby, UN Secretariat

Remarks by USG Kiyotaka Akasaka

Ambassador Zhang,
Madame Zhong,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my honour and my privilege to welcome this special exhibition to United Nations Headquarters.

I would like, at the outset, to give a special welcome to Ambassador Zhang. This is his first exhibition opening at the United Nations since he arrived in New York just a few weeks ago.

I am confident that the excellent working relationship between the Department of Public Information and the Permanent Mission of China will continue and be strengthened during Ambassador Zhang's tenure.

This exhibition, “LOOKING FORWARD TO WORLD EXPO 2010, SHANGHAI” gives us an advance look at the amazing preparations underway for the next World Expo.

Shanghai will host the Expo from the 1st of May to the 31st of October in the year 2010. Some 70 million people are expected to visit the city during that six-month period.

The 2010 World Expo is expected to be one of the most dazzling ever. The theme is “Better City, Better Life,” and it is entirely fitting that it should take place in Shanghai, the world's seventh largest megacity.

It is also entirely fitting that we should open this exhibition today -- World Habitat Day -- with this year's theme of “harmonious cities.” I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the city of Nanjing, which is the recipient of this year's HABITAT Scroll of Honour Special Citation, which is conferred by UN-HABITAT for outstanding achievements in the cause of sustainable human settlements.

The Chinese cities of Shaoxing and Zhangjiagang were also given the HABITAT Scroll of Honour Award this year, along with the Rwandan capital, Kigali, the Russian city of Bugulma, and Ciudad Juarez, a Mexican city on the United States border.

More than 20 UN agencies will take part in the UN Pavilion at the World Expo, which has been called, “the Olympics of Development”.

As you will see, this special exhibition also provides us with glimpses and stories about Shanghai, and the history of the World Expo, and the United Nations' association with these events. There is much to see and learn here.

So let me congratulate the organizers, and most particularly Ambassador Zhang and the Chinese Mission, and the Bureau of Shanghai World Expo Coordination. I would also like to acknowledge the Shanghai International Culture Association. Thank you!