

Press release

07 May 2010

The UAE Pavilion at Shanghai Expo 2010 is completed

Foster + Partners design for the UAE pavilion at the 2010 Shanghai Expo has opened the inauguration was attended by HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister of the UAE on Friday 14 May. Drawing inspiration from the form of a sand dune, the pavilion is a reference to this symbolic feature of the desert landscape shared by each of the seven emirates.

The landscape and climate of the UAE are integral to Emirati culture. Like a sand dune, the pavilion appears smooth on the side that bears the full force of the wind and rough and textured on the other side. The northern elevation is more porous to admit natural light, while the southern elevation has a solid façade, to minimise solar gain. A stainless steel skin, treated to appear golden, encloses the jewel-like shell.

The complex structure is a triangulated lattice of flat stainless steel panels, joined by adjustable nodes, which are designed to enable the pavilion to be demounted on site and constructed quickly and economically. The peak rises to 20 metres in height and it is entered via a glazed lip at the pavilion's base. Light penetrates the building's business centre and VIP area through glazed vertical strips, which illuminate the pavilion from within by night. Internally, the fit out by Ralph Applebaum Associates offers an interactive experience, and a dynamic lighting design will reveal the exposed lattice shell of the structure.

With capacity for 450 people and enclosing 3,000 square metres of exhibition space, the pavilion is one of the largest structures at the 2010 Shanghai Expo and highlights the UAE's progressive stance on sustainability. Responding to the Expo's Better Cities, Better Lives theme, the pavilion will showcase projects such as the Masdar Initiative, the new 6 million square metre carbon neutral zero waste community in Abu Dhabi, intended to become a centre for the development of new ideas for energy production.

Senior Partner, Gerard Evenden, said of the project: The Shanghai Expo is an important event and we are proud to have created the pavilion that will represent the United Arab Emirates on this international stage. The dune is a timeless symbol of the Emirates, yet the state-of-the-art technology that makes this form possible can be seen to represent the UAE's more recent past and future development. Just as the cities of the UAE rise from the desert, the pavilion's natural form will provide a counterpoint to the urban landscape of Shanghai.

-Ends-

For further information
please contact Katy Harris at
Foster + Partners,
T +44 (0)20 7738 0455
F +44 (0)20 7738 1107
E press@fosterandpartners.com