

## *Theme Statement – Sverige i Expo 2010*

### *Introduction*

Sweden extends its appreciation to the Chinese organisers for setting the theme “Better City – Better Life” for Expo 2010. At a time when more than half of the global population lives in cities this is a very appropriate theme. The history of the industrialised countries as well as present day experience from developing countries tells us that individuals leave rural areas in the pursuit of a better life in cities. However, all too often people have experienced hardship and hazards in an urban landscape not designed for good living. In Sweden we are not facing the magnitude of problems associated with mega-cities, nevertheless we believe that our efforts to create a sustainable urban environment in harmony with human nature can serve as an inspiration at Expo 2010.

### *Sweden - Spirit of Innovation*

We have chosen Sweden - Spirit of Innovation as our theme for the Swedish participation. We want to show the great potential there is in solving problems through innovation. Having carefully studied the five sub-themes suggested, we have concluded that our contribution will mainly focus on three of the five sub-themes:

1. innovation of science and technology in the city
2. rural-urban interaction
3. economic prosperity in the city,

all of which we believe to be highly relevant.

We have also chosen three key words for the Swedish participation: Sustainability, Innovation and Communication.

### *Sustainability*

For over half a century Sweden has combined economic growth with a high level of concern for the environment and a commitment to provide health and social services to all inhabitants.

In 1972 Sweden was honoured to host the first United Nations Conference on the Environment. This conference inspired many countries to enact their first environmental protection legislation.

However, there are still many environmental problems, in Sweden and around the world. Contaminated water supplies and oceans, urban air pollution and the extinction of endangered species are some of the challenges we are all facing.

Recently, better knowledge of climate change has united countries around the world to face the global environmental challenge. These issues are also of great importance in China. The route China takes will be crucial for a common policy on climate change for both industrialised and developing countries. Sweden is hoping for a successful international agreement to slow down climate change.

The concept of sustainability is very important for Swedes. The public and private sectors have worked together to introduce new technology and managed to develop innovative and creative sustainable solutions with great success. Some of these new methods are now widely used around the world.

Sustainability is about minimising the use of non-renewable natural resources, by basing agricultural, industrial and domestic activities on technology that reuses energy and uses renewable material such as wood.

From an economic perspective, sustainability is about building a prudent economic base. This is essential, regardless of whether we are talking about private investments or about managing the national public sector economy. Investments must be based on good quality. Finally, sustainability is also about human relations based on respect for the wellbeing of people. A sustainable society is also about creating conditions to enable individuals to enjoy physical and mental health and longevity among friends and relatives and to participate in society. It is also about building an inclusive society, based on respect for the diversity of individuals and individual freedom.

At Expo 2010 Sweden wants to contribute to the necessary understanding of Sustainability – to invite the visitors to learn about the challenges and also to catch a glimpse of and be inspired by some of the solutions Sweden has developed.

### *Innovation*

Swedes are innovative. As Sweden is situated in the northern part of Europe, living conditions are characterised by long distances, a sparse population and snowy winters. This has fostered an innovative spirit that generated a number of famous technical innovations and industrial brand names as early as the 19th century. Some well known Swedish companies received significant orders from China as far back as as 130 years ago.

Sweden was the first country to have compulsory education for all children. A similar respect for knowledge fostered several great scientists in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The Nobel Prize stems from the industrial innovation that once created the fortune behind the Nobel bequest. Combined with the expertise within the Swedish scientific bodies that award the prize, this has made the Nobel prize such an important inspiration to scientists all over our world.

Swedish universities have established successful research centres in many disciplines. An important factor is that Sweden spends more per capita on research than any other country.

At Expo 2010 Sweden wants to demonstrate the power of innovations! How people can improve urban environments by using innovativeness, creativity and scientific knowledge.

### *Communication*

In a sparsely populated country like Sweden communication in various forms has always been a challenge. Long distances created a need for a high quality infrastructure using rail and truck technology that has developed into today's modern logistic chains.

In the 1880s Swedes fell in love with the telephone and 100 years later the Nordic region was the first part of the world where mobile telephones became widespread.

Today the combination of wire and wireless technology is opening up fantastic new opportunities to both bring people closer and to handle everyday tasks in a new way. The first telephone installed in Shanghai was made and delivered by a Swedish company, the same company that is today a major supplier for the Chinese telecommunication market.

A very important task is to establish contacts and relationships between individuals. But it is not only a matter of establishing an electronic connection; it is also about facilitating dialogue between people. Sweden is often seen as a country of consensus, with a decision-making process in private as well as in public that often allows for a lively discussion before a common position is reached. This tradition has been valuable in the building of a harmonious and open society, where people have trust in the institutions of state and commerce.

At Expo 2010 Sweden wants to present the importance of communication! How new communication technology is opening up new frontiers, but also how dialogue among individuals can strengthen society.

### *The Pavilion*

Sweden will build a 3,000m<sup>2</sup> pavilion. This pavilion is meant to be a meeting place more than a showroom. Sweden is coming to Expo 2010 to promote even better relations between Swedes, Chinese and other peoples.

The Swedish pavilion is designed to be a welcoming venue for a range of contact-making activities. We hope to be the host of many interesting meetings and rewarding cultural encounters.

Company executives, together with business contacts, clients, suppliers, co-workers and government officials can experience Sweden and our Swedish ideas as well as meet Swedes from different parts of society. Young Chinese professionals and students will be given the opportunity to meet Swedish companies, regions and cities.

In this welcoming environment we also offer our honoured guests an opportunity to sample modern Swedish cuisine on the top floor of the pavilion

### *The Exhibition*

The lower floors of the pavilion are intended for the Swedish exhibition. Visitors will move through elements in the exhibition that represent the city's various services: water and wastewater, indoor-climate, energy, waste and refuse, transport and raw materials. Visitors will actively search for answers in a captivating, creative and interactive dialogue with the exhibition in which they will experience:

1. the thrills of innovation
2. the amazing effects of cooperation and open dialogue
3. the satisfaction of environmentally sustainable development.

Visitors will also encounter "amazing facts" about Swedish life in the shape of various images.

We hope that the visitors to the Swedish pavilion will leave with a lasting impression of Sweden, Swedish culture, social spirit, engineering, tradition and love of nature and not least a sense of our Spirit of Innovation!

Overall , we would like the pavilion to build, enhance and maintain long lasting relations between Sweden and China, between Swedes and Chinese.