

Milan Has Won Its Bid to Host Expo 2015

Eleonora Mazzucchi (April 01, 2008)



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Mayor of Milan Letizia Moratti is elated that her city has won its bid to host the Universal Exhibition (Expo) 2015. The Italian Expo delegation met her with howls and ovations when the announcement was made by the Paris-based selection board. The Turkish city of Izmir, also vying to host the fair, lost out.

The Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), made up of 152 countries, was ultimately persuaded by Milan's presentation for a green-themed Expo. Lending his support was eco-pioneer and Nobel



Peace Prize winner Al Gore, who called the proposal, entitled *Nutrire il Pianeta, Energia per la Vita* (Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life), “very solid”. Indeed the Milan outline includes a decidedly proactive agenda: waging war against famine and malnutrition, launching technology and sustainable development initiatives and forging the multinational cooperation to see those objectives through. Elaborating on the plans, Moratti said, “Our Expo will not just be a logo, but it will be a network to enable the construction of schools and hospitals for everyone.” She added: “We've done a lot of work in terms of listening and understanding, and we are not alone—we are collaborating with many charities and associations for a project that favours countries less fortunate than we are.”

Joining Moratti, Premier Romano Prodi and Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema at the presentation were Milan footballer Clarence Seedorf, along with musical artists Andrea Bocelli and the Senegalese Youssou N'Dour, both of whom gave performances to show their support.

Meanwhile Turkish President Abdullah Gul gracefully conceded the victory—86 votes against 65 in the BIE count—and called Milan's presentation “beautiful”. Italy's politicians hailed the victory, including President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano who proclaimed it was “a great day for Italy” and “a reason for pride”. The Italian delegation eventually joined Gul on stage to compliment the Turkish presentation, *New Routes for a Better World—Health for All*, with Prodi saying that “only two Mediterranean countries could end the presentation all together on the stage.”

The next expos will be held in Shanghai in 2010 and Yeosu, South Korea in 2012, ahead of the Milan event.

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