

Liege's bid to host World Expo 2017 top on agenda during ACP Committee of Ambassadors visit

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ACP Press Release: 22 June 2011: Members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Committee of Ambassadors visited the Belgian city of Liege today on the invitation of the Colleges and the city.

The visit was organised by the City of Liege in partnership with the Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) in Brussels. The intention of the visit was to allow the ACP Ambassadors to visit key sites in the city and to meet with leaders of the province which is bidding to host the World Expo in 2017.

The ACP Ambassadors were taken on a guided tour in the SOS Planet Liege, which places emphasise on the importance of preserving the environment. The message in the SOS Planet is that climate disturbances and disasters are disrupting the broad outlines of economic growth and are heavily mortgaging the capacities for future development. Without lapsing into catastrophic scenarios, the time has come to ask the right questions in order to establish a realistic diagnosis and orientate the debate towards solutions.

The Ambassadors later met with President of the Provincial College, Mr. Andre Gilles, and the Mayor of the City, Vice-President of the Senate, Willy Demeyer, at the Provincial Palace. Both leaders expressed their gratitude and honor in hosting the ACP Committee of Ambassadors as it allowed them to showcase the city's bid to the visiting ambassadors. Chairman of the Committee of Ambassadors and Ambassador of Nigeria, H.E H. E. Mr. Usman Alhaji Baraya, in expressing the Group's appreciation, spoke highly of the City of Liege for the initiative to invite the ACP Group.

He said the visit was a significant milestone as it was the first time that the ACP Group were invited to such an important event. Mr. Baraya spoke positively about Liege's bid – noting that the ACP and Belgium have a long historical tie and he was positive that the ACP would give Liege the necessary support in its bid to host the World Expo in 2017. In a personal show of support for the City of Liege, Ambassador Baraya had also personally accepted to be one of the Ambassadors of the Liege 2017 bid.

Meanwhile most of the Ambassadors have expressed their strong satisfaction on what they saw during the trip, in particular, the professionalism with which the visit was organised.

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