

Joint presidency / Commission press announcement "The image of Europe"

An Exhibition and Symposium on representation in and the perception of Europe.

The exhibition 'The Image of Europe' will be inaugurated on Monday September 13 by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, Atzo Nicolai, Minister for European Affairs and Bernard Bot, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas and his think tank AMO conceived the exhibition - situated in the centre of Rond Point Schuman by courtesy of the Belgian Authorities - and developed it under the joint sponsorship of the Dutch Presidency and the European Commission. Entry to the exhibition is free and opening times for the public are daily until November 28 from 10h to 19h. The inauguration will be followed by a symposium organised by Rem Koolhaas and the Foreign Policy Centre. Koolhaas already contributed innovatively in 2001 to the working group and the report on "Brussels Capital of Europe"- and focuses on applying architectural thinking to other domains of reality. The Foreign Policy Centre, led by Mark Leonard, is a well known British policy think tank and has often collaborated with AMO.

"The Image of Europe"

The aim of the exhibition is to show the way in which Europe is represented through words and symbols. The symposium explores contrasting perceptions by confronting "Europeans" with the views of "non Europeans". Both events are meant to serve as an indication of the work to be done and as a demonstration of the enormous and unexplored potential of the image of Europe. The exhibition and symposium can be seen as part of the wider issue of 'Communicating Europe' and are intended to further stimulate public debate. 'Communicating Europe' will be further discussed at the informal meeting of Ministers for European Affairs in Amsterdam on October 5.

The exhibition contains an 80 metre panoramic mural - a chronological arrangement of Europe's visual manifestations, past and present - that shows how the image of Europe has evolved over the last 50 years and speculates about its possible future. The symposium will confront views of Europe from the inside and the outside. Both events act like a mirror of each other: the exhibition by addressing Europe's 'iconographic deficit', the symposium by highlighting the different ways in which the image of Europe is perceived.

Press Programme Monday 13th September:

10h00 -11h00 Press preview of the exhibition in the tent at Rond Point Schuman

11h00-11h30 Press conference Council Press Room by Atzo Nicolai, Rem Koolhaas and Elena Saraceno of the European Commission.

The inauguration will take place from 18h to 20h in the tent. This will be followed by a symposium from 20h30 to 22h30 in the Charlemagne Building. Participation in these events is by invitation only. EbS Television will cover the inauguration and parts of the symposium and will make footage available to the press.

For further information, please contact the Presidency Press Service (Joop Nijssen, 497448359).

For images please contact the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), Public Relations, 10-2438200 or pr@oma.nl.