

## Swiss Village for Masdar City

Gerhard Hope , August 4th, 2009

Masdar and the Swiss Village Association (SVA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to plan and develop a Swiss Village within the Masdar City development, the world's first carbon-neutral community.

"The Swiss Village and the involvement of Swiss companies in Masdar City will assist Masdar to reach its ambitious vision. Swiss technology companies have been leading in energy efficiency, and their participation in the Swiss Village will provide a unique model combining the high quality of life and the low environmental footprint that Masdar City is advocating," said Masdar CEO Dr. Sultan Al Jaber. "We are committed to forming a strong relationship that provides strategic opportunities for both Masdar City and the Swiss companies who are part of the Swiss Village."



The Swiss Village will be a distinct neighbourhood within Masdar City, which will integrate and serve as the home of Swiss companies with expertise in clean technology. The agreement between SVA and Masdar provides a framework that allows Swiss companies — who will be among Masdar City's first tenants — to take a role in the design, construction and occupation of the Swiss Village. In turn, this will provide Masdar with a wider access to leading technologies and materials from the Swiss market available for deployment throughout the city.

"Today's agreement follows a MoU signed in January 2009 by the UAE authorities and the Swiss government to promote research and technology transfer in the field of renewable energies. It also follows early involvement in Masdar by Swiss financial and planning companies," said Swiss Ambassador Wolfgang Bruehlhart.

Masdar City — a carbon-neutral, zero-waste, car-free city fully powered by renewable energy — will host cleantech companies and various supporting organisations to ensure its day-to-day functions. As the UAE's clean technology hub and home to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), this MoU with the SVA will further assist in attracting to Masdar City educators, researchers, entrepreneurs, policy makers and experts from the renewable energy sector.

Together they will create an environment ripe for innovation and technology development. Cleantech companies established in the city will have the opportunity to test their technologies and contribute to its sustainable growth. Additionally, they will conduct research and development alongside the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, a graduate research institution established in partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

"This is an unparalleled opportunity for participating Swiss companies to be a part of a truly historic effort to make sustainable living a reality. We look forward to leveraging our expertise across the cleantech sector to become engaged in this project and, at the same time, create a new centre for Swiss companies in the Gulf region," said Rolf Jeker, president of the Swiss Village Steering Committee.