

下午好 **Xiawu hao** (Goedemiddag)

欢迎大家到世博会比利时馆 **Huanying dajia dao**  
(Welkom in het Belgische Paviljoen)

Hereby I welcome you to Antwerp week at the Belgian Pavilion on the World Expo.

As governor of the province of Antwerp I am very happy and proud that every week in this Pavilion is kind of Antwerp week. Even the architect of this Pavilion is from Antwerp. The contribution of Antwerp spearheads is remarkable. Lots of the crown jewels are shown here permanently. Diamonds, fashion, creative economy, smart logistics, sustainable development,...

That is no coincidence. The province of Antwerp is a highly prosperous industrialized region in the north of Belgium, one of the founding members of the European Union.

The capital of Belgium, Brussels, is home to the headquarters of the European Union and a host of other international organizations and corporations.

The province of Antwerp is widely acknowledged as a powerhouse of the national economy. The province is strategically located in Flanders, Belgium's Dutch-speaking region but well known for its highly-educated multilingual population. Antwerp is responsible for 19% of the added value in Belgium and for 33% in Flanders. When looking at export our province is accountable for 28% in Belgium and 47% in Flanders.

Economically, Antwerp has long been recognized as one of the world's premier cities for diamonds and fashion, and host of the second biggest petrochemical cluster in the world.

But Antwerp has far more to offer.

For any company pursuing European market expansion, Antwerp is the logical base because of its world-class port, multimodal Europe-wide connections, highly creative workforce and inexpensive real estate.

The port of Antwerp is the largest and most diversified petrochemical centre in Europe and second in the world. No fewer than seven of the ten largest chemical companies in the world have one or more production sites within the Antwerp petrochemical cluster. The companies of Essencia have a lot to offer: the port of Antwerp, high qualified employees, exceptional achievements in the field of medicine and vaccines and many more. We can proudly say that nowhere else in the world there are more medicines and vaccines developed pro person than in Belgium.

We can say, without exaggeration, that our chemistry and life science are world-class. The companies represented by Essencia yearly invest 2.3 billion euros in research and development of new products and applications. Their goal is to improve the quality of life.

During this seminar you can see some of the technological breakthroughs the sector has realised. We are very proud of the many achievements of the chemical cluster in the hearth of Antwerp.

I am positive you will share my enthusiasm after this seminar.