Message
Joseph Deiss, President of the Swiss Confederation

Your Majesty,
President,
Dear Guests,

CERN celebrates its 50th anniversary this year:
This is an important event for the international science community and a source of legitimate satisfaction for Switzerland, one of its host countries, which I am honoured to be representing today. At the same time - and this is particularly dear to me - it is an important event for Europe: CERN was born from the desire of twelve European countries to work together and who decided at the start of the 1950s, to join efforts so as to advance the cause of research in physics. Things have come along way since then! The idea of European collaboration has expanded from an economic to a political level, and to the European Union we know today. The establishment of CERN was one of the first milestones on the path to creating a united Europe; It is worth remembering that as we celebrate here.

CERN's merits don't end there. From the very beginning, this organisation drew its staff from around the world, and brought together scientists from countries, which just a few years earlier had faced one another on the battlefields. Furthermore, CERN has become a laboratory of peace, a place where people from all nations, religions and cultures meet. I am convinced that in this way CERN has contributed to the détente and mutual understanding between peoples. And thanks to the Porte Charles de Gaulle, President, we are helping to improve the quality of life for many of CERN's staff.

If CERN has acquired a global dimension, it is precisely due to its staff and the scientific excellence they bring with them. The distinctions, prizes medals earned by CERN and its researchers is impressive. The staff at CERN and its visiting scientists have been able to create a team spirit that has contributed to making the centre the leading laboratory in the world for particle physics.

Setting up CERN also represented a considerable investment. The funds could have been put to use in other areas closer to the public's more immediate needs. Although, contrary to accepted beliefs, it was here at CERN that the world wide web was developed! However, convincing the politicians of the day to look beyond the next elections and the direct financial burdens was not the least of the achievements accomplished by the physicists and promoters of the first hour. Convincing them to dare to gamble on the future and invest in education and research. For it is a win-win situation that benefits the dynamism of the economy.

The pioneers of CERN and the politicians of the time should be praised for their courage and good judgment.
Those are virtues that one would perhaps like to see more often in the debates and decisions of parliaments, governments and business leaders today. And in particular, the public and private sectors together must continue to invest in the future!

I cannot think about CERN without being fascinated by the philosophical dimension of its central train of thought: what is matter? What is its origin? Today we know that the Big Bang is the source of all the elements and molecules that exist in the universe - and thus of all living things. The earth was therefore born from the stars, just like the animals and plants, and not least man! When we talk of Creation, we realise that never are science and philosophy as close as in the field of particle physics. The fact that we can ask these questions, the oldest in Humanity, at this leading centre of research shows that advanced science is ultimately very close to the most elementary preoccupations. For all these reasons, I am delighted that CERN has been able to pursue its mission these last fifty years and foster research, culture and philosophy in the process.

A jubilee is above all a celebration.
That is why Switzerland would like to offer CERN a gift: it is this pavilion made entirely from wood, baptised the Globe of Science and Innovation.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to inaugurate it today in you company.
May this sphere accompany CERN for many years to come!