



Payerne, 7 April 2010

### **Maiden flight for Solar Impulse!**

*This morning at 10:27, the Solar Impulse HB-SIA took off from Payerne (VD) airfield on its maiden flight.*

Under the eyes of thousands of spectators from all over Switzerland, Solar Impulse HB-SIA slowly climbed up to 1200 meters. During one hour and 27 minutes Solar Impulse test pilot Markus Scherdel spent familiarizing himself with the prototype's flight behaviour and performing the initial flight exercises before making the first landing on the Vaudois tarmac. The execution of these various manoeuvres (turns, simulating the approach phase) was designed to get a feel for the aircraft and verify its controllability.

"This first flight was for me a very intense moment!" exclaimed Solar Impulse test pilot Markus Scherdel, still under the emotion of the event, on stepping down from the aircraft. "The HB-SIA behaved just as the flight simulator told us! Despite its immense size and feather weight, the aircraft's controllability matches our expectations!"

"This first mission was the most risky phase of the entire project. 87 minutes of intense emotion after 7 years of research, testing and perseverance. Never has an airplane as large and light ever flown before! The aim was to verify the prototype's behaviour in flight and to test its reaction to various manoeuvres. The success of this first flight allows us to envisage the further program with greater serenity!" said a delighted André Borschberg, CEO and co-founder of the project.

"We still have a long way to go until the night flights and an even longer way before flying round the world, but today, thanks to the extraordinary work of an entire team, an essential step towards achieving our vision has been taken", adds Solar Impulse Chairman and initiator Bertrand Piccard. "Our future depends on our ability to convert rapidly to the use of renewable energies. Solar Impulse is intended to demonstrate what can be done already today by using these energies and applying new technologies that can save natural resources."

Press releases, films and photo will be available for downloading on:

<http://press.solarimpulse.com/>

User: solar-impulse

Password: solar-info06

For further information: [press@solarimpulse.com](mailto:press@solarimpulse.com) +41 21 693 89 35

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**Solar Impulse HB-SIA, the first aircraft designed to fly day and night without fuel or pollution, demonstrating the immense potential of renewable energies.**

Six years of intense hard work, calculations, simulations and tests by a 70-person team and 80 partners have gone into completing this totally new carbon fibre aircraft, with the wingspan of an Airbus A340 (63.4m) and the weight of an average family car (1600 kg). Never before has such a large and lightweight aircraft been built. Almost 12 000 solar cells, integrated into the wing, feed renewable energy to the four electric motors with a maximum power of 10 HP each, and by day also charge the lithium-polymer batteries (400 kg) which will enable the aircraft to fly at night. The Solar Impulse project is supported, among others, by its main partners, Solvay, Omega and Deutsche Bank, by its official partner Bayer Material Science, by its official scientific partner EPFL, by its engineering partner Altran and by its advisory aircraft manufacturer Dassault-Aviation.

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