

UFI Officially Opens its Middle East/Africa Regional Office

Abu Dhabi, UAE - May 24, 2006: UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, today officially launched its Middle East/Africa Regional Office in Abu Dhabi (UAE) in an Opening Ceremony attended by UFI members and dignitaries from throughout the region. This regional office will serve the association's members in the Middle East and Africa. Its focus will be to support UFI's members in the region to profit from new networking opportunities, to develop industry information resources and to implement a variety of education programmes.

Tom Beyer, UFI President, highlighted the important role played by UFI, stating, "UFI is vital to the development of the trade fairs and exhibition industry on a global level. The facilitation of information exchange provided by our association is necessary for the development of the international professional quality standards which our clients expect."

HE Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC) recognized the importance of fairs and exhibitions in the country's developing economy. In his welcoming comments he stated, "As a UFI member and Platinum Sponsor, ADNEC, is an active supporter of the creation of this new regional office. We will continue to work closely with UFI to ensure that our fairs and exhibitions provide quality events for the development of commercial opportunities throughout the region."

Ibrahim Al Khaldi, the newly appointed UFI Middle East/Africa Regional Office Manager, provided insight into the immediate office objectives, saying "We look forward to increasing our contacts with exhibition organizers and venue managers in the region and including them in our UFI ranks in the future." As a first step in this direction, the UFI Middle East/Africa Chapter confirmed during its meeting today in Abu Dhabi, that UFI will organize a major seminar targeted at professionals from the exhibitions industry. The Chapter's Action Plan calls for this to be held in the region in early 2007.

UFI already has 28 members in the Middle East/Africa region and has recognised the "UFI Approved" quality of 41 exhibitions in the Region. UFI has an Asia/Pacific regional office located in Hong Kong and anticipates that this new Middle East/Africa regional office will be equally successful in supporting UFI global objectives.

For further information please contact:

Lili Eigl

UFI Communications Manager
UFI Headquarters
35bis, rue Jouffroy-d'Abbans, F-75017 Paris
Tel: +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12
Email : lili@ufi.org
www.ufi.org

Attachments:

1. List of UFI's 28 members in the Middle East/Africa region
2. List of UFI's 41 recognised "UFI Approved" quality exhibitions in the Region
3. UFI Document: Middle East Exhibition Industry Facts & Figures

UFI Background Information: UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, promotes, serves and represents the trade fair and exhibition industry worldwide. UFI remains committed to developing and promoting the exhibition industry as a tool to enhance international trade and economic growth.

Via its member organisations, including the world's leading show organisers and fairground owners, industry partners and 39 professional associations, UFI is present in 73 countries on 5 continents, its members are recognised internationally for their commitment to promoting professional quality and standards. UFI members are responsible for the management and operation of over 4,500 exhibitions around the world.