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## Exhibition Industry Commits to Viable Sustainable Development Practices

*Paris/Bangkok: February 23, 2011:* Eric Everard, President of UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, addressed the issue of sustainability from the perspectives of destination, venue, organizer, service provider and client and urged the exhibition industry to meet this common challenge. Speaking at the UFI Focus Meeting on Sustainable Development hosted by the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) in Bangkok on February 23, Everard reminded the sixty meeting delegates that “we must now join our collective efforts using best industry practices to ensure that our exhibition business is a leading light for exhibitors and buyers to see that we are a wholly sustainable business.” Everard stressed that there are significant economic and human benefits to be gained from a sustainable approach to exhibitions, saying “While benefits may take time to materialize, UFI and its 550 members in 84 countries are working closely with international organizations to establish common standards for improvement.”

During this second UFI Focus Meeting on sustainable development, speakers and delegates shared insights and information on current global initiatives with particular attention to developments in Thailand, India, and China.

The Focus Meeting was organized in compliance with guidelines established by the Green Meetings Thailand programme. Mr. Akapol Sorasuchart, President of The Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau said that, “as the official organization responsible for Thailand’s MICE industry, TCEB has recognized the significance of sustainable development. International delegates today care about whether destinations support sustainable environmental efforts, and TCEB needs to lead Thailand in that direction. We believe that to increase revenue for the country, Thailand’s MICE industry needs credible tools to attract delegates from across the world, and we believe that Green Meetings are a crucial part of the answer.”

Michael Duck, Chair of UFI’s Committee on Sustainable Development and Moderator of the meeting, stated that, “The consensus among delegates is that the exhibition industry must work closely with local and regional authorities to balance long-term sustainable development requirements with short-term business imperatives. It is only through a long term commitment to sustainable environmental objectives now that the exhibition industry will share in the benefits of a healthy business environment in the future. The reality is that exhibition organizers, venue operators and exhibitors must cooperate closely as we gain a better understanding of workable and effective environmental parameters and their implications for the future sustainability of the industry as a whole”.

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*UFI is the global association of the world's leading tradeshow organizers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI's main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry.*

*UFI represents over 550 member organizations in 84 countries around the world. Almost 900 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.*

For additional information, please go to

[www.ufi.org](http://www.ufi.org)

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