

## Industry leaders gather in Kigali for the UFI Middle East & Africa Conference

- Industry leaders from 15+ countries gathered in Rwanda for 2024 UFI MEA Conference
- Conference hosted by Rwanda Convention Bureau at Kigali Convention Centre
- International line-up of speakers explored the exhibition landscape of the region

**Paris / Kigali – 23 April 2024:** The UFI Middle East & Africa Conference brought together industry leaders, professionals, and stakeholders in Kigali, Rwanda, from 15-17 April. Hosted by the Rwanda Convention Bureau at the Kigali Convention Centre, the conference explored opportunities, challenges, and innovations shaping the region.

Over the course of three days, attendees from 15+ countries had the opportunity to network, exchange knowledge, and collaborate with colleagues from MEA and beyond. Engaging sessions tackled our industry's most pressing topics, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), emerging market growth, industry trends, and sustainability, providing invaluable perspectives to navigate the region's evolving exhibition landscape.

“Our profound appreciation goes to the Rwanda Convention Bureau for graciously hosting the UFI Middle East and Africa Conference, an event that has undeniably set a new benchmark for industry gatherings in this region, through thought-provoking discussions and diverse topics, a strong line-up of speakers and experts, unparalleled networking opportunities, in addition to memorable social activities. We are immensely thankful to our sponsors, partners, and the diverse group of attendees, whose collaboration and insights turned this conference into a unique experience. Rwanda's warmth and hospitality have left an unforgettable mark on us all”, commented **Naji El Haddad, UFI Regional Director MEA**.

**Janet Karemera, CEO of Rwanda Convention Bureau**, added: “Hosting the UFI MEA Conference for the first time in Africa is a testament to Rwanda's commitment and the continent at large to establish its presence in the global exhibition sector landscape. We were privileged to learn from peers about how vast the possibilities are to expand our portfolio as a destination with the right investment and support from industry stakeholders.”

The conference was also an opportunity for the UFI Middle East & Africa Chapter to convene and exchange strategies for enhancing the Chapter's growth, along with fostering greater diversity and inclusion. UFI Regional Director MEA Naji El Haddad outlined forthcoming plans for the MEA Chapter in 2024, emphasizing upcoming events and activations, advocacy efforts, including Global Exhibitions Day on 5 June, and initiatives in education and research. The subsequent chapter meeting is scheduled to occur in Cologne, Germany, during the 91st UFI Global Congress.

One of the highlights of the conference was the social activities that provided participants with the opportunity to forge new partnerships and strengthen existing relationships, all with vibrant Rwanda as their backdrop. Numerous post-conference tours immersed participants in the host city's rich culture and history, showcasing Kigali as a dynamic and emerging hub for exhibitions and business events.

All conference sessions will be made available to UFI members and conference participants in the coming days as on-demand videos.

As the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, UFI organises annual regional conferences in the Middle East & Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Americas, and Europe, as well as the UFI Global Congress.

Full details about the 2024 UFI Middle East & Africa Conference can be found on the event website: [www.ufimea.org](http://www.ufimea.org).

**Attachments:**

- [UFI Middle East & Africa Chapter Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda](#)
- [2024 UFI Middle East & Africa Conference visual](#)

***About UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry:** UFI is the global trade association of the world's tradeshow organisers 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 directly represents more than 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its more than 68 national and regional association members. More than 850 member organisations in 87 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Over 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.*

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