



## **UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, opens 79<sup>th</sup> Congress today in Abu Dhabi**

*Abu Dhabi/Paris - November 7, 2012:* UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, opened its 79th Congress today at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC). A record 450 international leaders and decision makers from the exhibition industry sector gathered from 55 countries for this annual event.

The Congress was officially opened by ADNEC's Managing Director, His Excellency Ali Saeed Bin Harmal Al Dhaheri, on behalf of His Excellency Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoun Al Nahyan, Chairman of ADNEC.

Al Dhaheri, commented: "I am delighted to welcome international senior officials from the exhibition sector to ADNEC, which is considered one of the most important exhibition centres in the region. Our strategic plan aims to raise the bar of Abu Dhabi as a conference and exhibition destination whilst backing Government's initiatives designed to fuel the MICE sector. ADNEC is looking forward to discussing mechanisms for identifying future industry growth at the event."

Pieter Idenburg, Group Chief Executive Officer at ADNEC, said, "We are delighted to host UFI's 79th summit, which will have a positive impact on exhibitions in our region. The UFI Congress offers a chance to showcase the strengths of ADNEC, our ability to respond rapidly to the needs of emerging markets, and our flexibility in hosting new experiences and businesses. We want to create the ideal environment for our main business areas and we are always working to meet the needs and exceed the expectations of our customers and guests."

Participants at the Congress are meeting to review an extensive agenda covering issues related to the latest developments and trends in the industry and its response to the global economic climate.

The theme of this year's UFI Congress is "where is the growth coming from?" UFI President, Arie Bienen, summarised the objective of this year's gathering: "UFI is focused on making sure that we add value to our members' businesses in all that we do. This Congress gives our members the opportunity to develop new business ties and to share information on key topics impacting our industry today."

Among the issues being addressed in the context of today's shifting economy are growth via social media; business opportunities in the Middle East; the symbiotic partnership between technology and nature and sustainable growth and corporate social responsibility.

Paul Woodward, UFI Managing Director, highlighted, "exhibitions aren't just about selling square metres. As a valuable face-to-face marketing medium, today's exhibitions play an important role in developing industry sector "communities" which bring buyers and sellers together throughout the year."

The 80<sup>th</sup> UFI Congress will be hosted by AKEI in Seoul (Korea) from 13-16 November 2013.

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### **About ADNEC**

Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC) is a strategic international venue development and management company. ADNEC's venue portfolio includes one of the most modern exhibition centres in the world, the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, and the UK capital's largest exhibition and conference venue, ExCeL London, and Al Ain Convention Centre in Al Ain.

ADNEC creates the ideal environment for Abu Dhabi's rapidly growing events industry. The projects surrounding the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre include: Capital Centre, a mixed-use development of 23 residential, commercial and mixed-use towers adjacent to the exhibition centre; Capital Gate, the iconic 35 storey record-breaking leaning tower that offers 14 storeys of grade A office space along with the 5-star Hyatt Capital Gate hotel; the interconnected four-star Aloft Hotel; and a 20,000sqm waterfront quayside (Marina).

The company also owns BoxOfficeME, the region's most advanced and high-tech ticket vendor, which complements its event facilities in the UAE; and Al Maa'ed Weddings, ADNEC's specialist weddings consultancy.

For more information visit [www.adnec.ae](http://www.adnec.ae); [www.excel-london.co.uk](http://www.excel-london.co.uk); [www.capitalgate.ae](http://www.capitalgate.ae); [www.boxofficeme.com](http://www.boxofficeme.com).

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### **ABOUT UFI**

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 610 member organizations in 85 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 about UFI, please go to

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

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