

Press Release

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INNOVATION KEY TO MALAYSIA'S BUSINESS EVENTS GROWTH

– MyCEB and ICCA Team Up to Organise Malaysia Meetings Innovation Day in Bid to Raise Malaysia's Global Competitiveness

Kuala Lumpur, 6 September 2011 – An impressive ensemble of international and local industry experts were lined up for a think tank session on how to strengthen Malaysia's international competitiveness in the global business events market at the inaugural Malaysia Meetings Innovation Day Seminar 2011, organised by the Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) recently.

Co-hosted by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, the event themed 'Meeting Outside the Box' was an opportunity created by MyCEB to encourage and nurture innovative thinking amongst industry players and subsequently, improve Malaysia's ranking as an international meetings destination.

Malaysia's goal is to be one of the top five meetings destinations in the Asia Pacific by year 2020. According to ICCA rankings, Malaysia is currently positioned at number seven with a 24 percent increase in the number of international conventions held in year 2010.

Headlining the seminar was Martin Sirk, Chief Executive Officer of ICCA. Sirk said, "Asia has undoubtedly been the 'hot' meetings destination over the last ten years, mirroring the dynamism of its economy and the tremendous strides the region has taken in terms of innovation, R&D and all forms of new technology. This combination of growth and innovation is what is driving the development of the region's meetings industry, and it is no surprise to see Malaysia at the forefront of this trend".

He added, "The government and private sector in Malaysia have not only been investing strongly in terms of great infrastructure, but also in professional education and in raising service standards. Even though the world is becoming even more competitive, Malaysia is in a great position to position itself as a top level meetings destination, and I see the inclusion of international meetings in the country's 'Economic Transformation Programme' as symptomatic of their clear understanding of our industry's strategic importance".

Joining Martin Sirk were a prominent line-up of industry specialists specially invited to participate in an open discussion on a range of hot industry topics particularly in key areas which would grow Malaysia's competitiveness.

Amongst the topics presented include 'Competing with the Best' by Gary Grimmer (Chief Executive Officer, GainingEdge) and 'Competition – Sleeping with the Enemy or Strategic Planning?' by Mike Williams (Senior Consultant, GainingEdge) plus an interactive panel discussion between the experts.

Speaking about the seminar, Zulkefli Hj Sharif (Chief Executive Officer, MyCEB) said, "I am extremely pleased that we have gathered this dynamic and diverse team of industry experts in Kuala Lumpur to engage with potential local hosts as well as our industry players. We hope that all participants would take this information to strengthen their knowledge, awareness and skill sets to further propel Malaysia as a premier business events destination."

In conjunction with the seminar, an Association Advisory Group Innovation Workshop was also initiated by MyCEB for the industry and national associations, to explore ways Malaysia can lift its profile and influence at the global stage.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

About the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB)

MyCEB was established in 2009 by Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia to further strengthen Malaysia's business tourism brand and position for the international meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) market. A non-profit organisation, MyCEB serves as a central hub to assist meeting and event planners to bid for and stage international business events in Malaysia and act as a conduit for national product development. MyCEB's goal is to

improve its rankings as an international meetings destination within ICCA¹ and to grow business tourism arrivals to Malaysia.

As a measure to further develop the international events industry, MyCEB has launched a specialist unit known as the International Events Unit (IEU) which focuses on identifying and supporting international event bids including sports, art and culture and lifestyle events. The IEU's goal is to identify and assist homegrown events with the potential to attract international publicity and international attendances.

For more information, please visit www.myceb.com.my

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¹ International Congress and Convention Association