

PRESS RELEASE

RECORD-BREAKING 57TH ICCA CONGRESS STIMULATES INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS INDUSTRY IN DUBAI

- *The largest ICCA Congress ever held outside Europe kicked off in Dubai on Sunday 11 November 2018*

Dubai, United Arab Emirates: 11 November 2018: The 57th ICCA Congress, one of the most prestigious events in the international association meetings industry calendar, has begun in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, with more than 1,150 senior meetings industry professionals and association meeting planners from over 75 countries in attendance.



Congress delegates have descended on the city from across the world to experience a dynamic four-day programme of education, networking and business opportunities. ICCA and Dubai Business Events, the city's official convention bureau, have collaborated to create an exciting offering of forward-thinking

education sessions, site visits to Dubai's most innovative enterprises and a social programme showcasing the best of Emirati cultural delights and local hospitality.

ICCA - the International Congress and Convention Association – is the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry. ICCA represents the world's leading suppliers in handling, transporting and accommodating international meetings and events, and now comprises over 1,100-member companies and organisations in almost 100 countries worldwide. Since its establishment 55 years ago, ICCA has specialised in the international association meetings sector, offering unrivalled data, communication channels, and business development opportunities.



The 2018 edition of ICCA's annual flagship event has achieved record attendance figures for any ICCA Congress held outside of Europe: a total of 1,156 industry experts from 79 countries have travelled to Dubai for the meeting. Organised with the support of key local partners including Dubai World Trade Centre, Congress Solutions International, Emirates and Dubai Business Events, the city's official convention bureau, the Congress brings together senior meetings industry professionals to exchange knowledge and ideas about the latest trends in international association meetings and business events.

Business events are increasingly being recognised as a crucial driver of Dubai's economy and positioning as a global business centre. As a global knowledge hub with a strong reputation for innovation, hosting the ICCA Congress offers Dubai a unique opportunity to present its extensive meetings infrastructure to business events heavyweights from across the globe, and in turn optimise international expertise to drive the development of the region's rapidly-evolving meetings industry.

Welcoming delegates to the congress, **His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General of Dubai Tourism** said: "Business events are a crucial part of not only our tourism strategy, but our wider economic development. Whether through the year-round calendar of home-grown trade shows – or major congresses like the ICCA Congress that we successfully bid for – we understand and use the power of meetings and conferences to facilitate the rapid transition to a knowledge economy, and to grow scientific advancement and key industry sectors in Dubai and the UAE.



“I would like to once again thank ICCA for selecting Dubai to host this congress, and to the Local Host Committee and all stakeholders involved for their role in planning. Our thanks also go to all the sponsors and supporting organisations of this event.”

Nina Freysen-Pretorius, President of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), said: “The number of international association meetings has doubled every ten years since the establishment of ICCA 55 years ago, and we have identified the Middle East as an important growth area. In fact, we now have a dedicated seat for the region on our board, a permanent regional director, and this is our first annual congress in the Middle East.

“We have also noted that the Dubai Association Centre is playing a significant role in growing global associations. In addition, we look forward to Expo 2020 Dubai, because when new ideas and people connect, our industry grows.”

The 57th ICCA Congress takes place in Dubai, U.A.E., from 11-14 November 2018. For more information, please visit the official website: www.congress2018.iccaworld.org.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About ICCA

The global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry

ICCA (The International Congress and Convention Association) represents the world's leading suppliers in handling, transporting and accommodating international meetings and events, and now comprises over 1,100-member companies and organisations in almost 100 countries worldwide. ICCA has specialised in the international association meetings sector since its establishment 55 years ago, offering unrivalled data, communication channels, and business development opportunities.

ICCA members represent the top destinations worldwide and the most experienced specialist suppliers. International meeting planners can rely on the ICCA network to find solutions for all their event objectives, such as: venue selection; technical and strategic advice; assistance with delegate transportation; full convention planning or ad hoc services.

About Dubai Business Events - the Official Convention Bureau

Dubai Business Events (DBE) – the Official Convention Bureau, aims to further develop and increase Dubai's share of the international business events market in order to grow economic development, jobs and knowledge creation in the emirate. DBE's main goal, as a division of Dubai Tourism, is to establish the Emirate as a premier business event destination by helping organizers of international meetings, incentives, congresses and exhibitions plan and manage every aspect of their event. As a member of BestCities Global Alliance DBE aim to deliver the world's best service experience for the meeting industry.

About Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world's leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism's mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai's tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate's commerce sector, and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

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