



## Key 2009 events at Bahrain expo attract 280,000 visitors

Manama, 4 November 2009

Bahrain Exhibition & Convention Authority (BECA) reported the latest statistics during BECA's third quarter 2009 presentation to the Authority's Board of Directors meeting led by H.E. Dr. Hassan A. Fakhro Minister of Industry & Commerce and Chairman of the Board of Directors. Seventeen of the key events including trade show and international exhibitions hosted at the Bahrain International Exhibition & Convention Centre's from January until August 2009 attracted a total of 280,000 local and international visitors, In addition the Bahrain Exhibition & Convention Authority has as of end of September 123 confirmed bookings until end 2009 compared with a total of 125 bookings during full 2008. According to figures recently released by Bahrain Exhibition & Convention Authority (BECA).

The Ministers stressed the importance of completing the construction of the new "Expo City" as a scheduled in 2012. The majority of the investment project cost which is estimated to be BD 287 million is expected to be funded by the private sector. Bahrain Exhibition & Convention Authority (BECA) which functions under the Ministry of Industry & Commerce, are partnering with Bahrain Mumtalakat Holdings Company, private investors and banks to ensure Bahrain has the future exhibition and convention facilities needed to meet growing international market demands. The project which will be constructed as part of @bahrain project will be built in Sakir City close to Bahrain International Circuits and on a plot of land equivalent to ten times the existing Bahrain International Exhibition & Convention Centre. It is estimated it will generate an incremental revenues of BD115 million annually to the national economy and will create a large number of new, full-time jobs opportunities. In addition to a multi-purpose arena, a large plenary hall and auditorium, the Expo City will have interconnected access to three hotels in the three-, four-, and five-star category with a combined capacity of 1,200 rooms. This project was presented as part of and inline with the Strategy of Ministry of Industry and Commerce 2009, /2010 – 2012, and was highly appreciated.

Following the meeting, His Excellency commented that BECA continues to maintain its mandate of promoting Bahrain as the regional exhibition and conference hub and contribute to attracting international exhibitions and conference particularly specialized events. BECA's performance has so far equaled its achievements in 2008 in many areas. He added that these bookings demonstrate the Centre's capability of holding simultaneous events, maximising its potential for generating revenue and opportunities for organisers, exhibitors and visitors to spend and invest in Bahrain.

Other highlights of BECA's achievements during the third quarter 2009 included plans for generating additional revenue streams and upgrading of BIECC facilities, the renewal of its alliance with the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry, its coordination of Bahrain's participation in the recent Aluminium China trade show, its partnership with one of the largest and most widely-respected certification bodies in the world, TUV Middle East (a Member of TUV Nord) for Food & Hospitality Expo 2010 and program of "Team Bahrain" to gain essential stakeholders buy-in to develop Bahrain's MICE industry & allow support network when bidding for international events on an annual basis allowing BECA to secure advantageous & cost-effective rates.

In addition to The Autumn Fair, other key events hosted at Bahrain's flagship exhibition and meeting facility earlier this year included Gulf Industry Fair 2009, Food & Hospitality Expo 2009, Bahrain International Natural Health Products & Green Expo, MEFTec (The world's premier financial technology event for emerging markets) 2009, Power-Gen Middle East 2009, Middle East Oil Show 2009, the 10th International MEACO Congress, Work Boat Gulf 2009, Riffa Views Bahrain International Garden Show (RVBIGS) 2009, gulfBID 2009, Bahrain International Travel Expo (BITE) 2009, Bahrain International E-Gov Forum & Exhibition, Energy & Water Conservation Expo 2009, Invest in Bahrain Forum and Bahrain Summer Festival 2009. ENDS