



Press Release

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NEW MILESTONE FOR MALAYSIA WITH THE HOSTING OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST CONGRESS OF CONCIERGE IN 2014

– MyCEB and Local Concierge Association Joined Forces to Ensure Successful International Congress Bid for Malaysia

Kuala Lumpur, 22 February 2013 – Over 400 of the world's best concierge from more than 43 countries are expected to converge in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the 61st Les Clefs d'Or UICH International Congress in 2014 as announced today by Mr Ragu Kumarasamy, President of the Society of Golden Keys Malaysia during the Congress' Pre-Event Launch at the Royal Chulan Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. The event was also attended by the Guest of Honour, YBhg. Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyyab (Director General of Tourism Malaysia), Ms. Virginia Casale (International President, Les Clefs d'Or UICH), Mr. Colin Toomey (2nd International Vice President, Les Clefs d'Or UICH), Encik Zulkefli Hj. Sharif (Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau – MyCEB) and Encik Mohamed Ismail Hussain (Consultant of the Congress). The Congress will be organised from 11th – 16th January 2014 under the patronage of YB Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen, Minister for Tourism, Malaysia.

Kuala Lumpur was chosen as the preferred destination by the International Board of Directors of the Union Internationale Des Concierges D'Hotels "Les Clefs d'Or", headquartered in Paris, following a competitive bid presentation by the Malaysian team in Toronto, Canada. The successful bid was initiated by Society of the Golden Keys Malaysia and supported by MyCEB, Kuala Lumpur City Hall and its hotel partners. The win further reinforces Malaysia's standing as the preferred meeting destination for global associations wanting to connect with Asia and to experience Malaysia's myriad of exciting attractions.

The concierge, means 'caretaker' or literally, 'keeper of the keys' in French, has been the hallmark of European hotels for centuries and is now fast becoming established in many well-known hotels in Asia. The first such association saw the light of day on 6th October 1929 when eleven concierges from the grand hotels of Paris joined forces to form an association. In Malaysia, the first known concierges started back in the 1980s in Penang and Kuala Lumpur. The unique profession has grown in Malaysia with the development of many international hotels in the country and the hosting of this conference in Malaysia will further grow the reputation of the famed Les Clefs d'Or in this region.

According to Mr. Ragu Kumarasamy, President, Society of the Golden Keys Malaysia, "Malaysia's intention to bid was presented at the International Board of Directors Meeting in Dubai in October 2010. Even at the preliminary stages, they were very impressed with the preparation made by the Malaysian team and last year in 2011, we were officially awarded the right to host the conference after United Kingdom (2012) and New Zealand (2013)."

"This will be our chance to highlight to the world what Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia has to offer not only in the tourism aspect, but also to share our warm hospitality to further promote ourselves as the premiere choice for business events in the world.. Many industry partners ranging from restaurateurs, transportation and tour service operators and even tourist destinations have stepped forward to show their support to help make this happen, and we do sincerely hope more will see the benefits of this Congress that we plan to host in 2014 after today's launch" continued Mr. Ragu.

Among the many programmes that have been planned during the 6-day Congress are the Opening Ceremony, a tour of Kuala Lumpur after dark, International Board of Directors Meeting, Street Food Fair, the General Assembly and a shopping trip which will definitely blew the delegates away. This is fitting as Kuala Lumpur has been ranked 2nd as the best shopping destination in Asia Pacific by The Globe Shopper Index for Asia Pacific whilst Malaysia, as a country is ranked 4th by CNN Travel as the best shopping destination in the world!

Society of Golden Keys Malaysia acts as an association of professional concierges of hotels and resort hotels in Malaysia, and as an affiliate of the Union Internationale Des Concierges d'Hotels "Les Clefs d'Or". Its objectives are to establish and promote high professional and ethical standards among concierges of hotels in Malaysia.

Also speaking at the launch event, Ms. Virginia Casale, International President, Les Clefs d'Or UICH has this to say, "The concierges who attend these meetings are in a unique position to refer their guests (both business and leisure travelers) to all segments of the local tourism industry. The sky is the limit and I believe that the future is in Malaysia – having one of the biggest growth in the hospitality sector in the world. The good organisation of the Congress will display to the world how strong and committed you are to our good name. Virginia

further added, “Les Clefs d’Or is a non-profit association; therefore we require assistance, both financial and non-financial, from our sponsors to successfully execute a Congress of the highest caliber. Your section with the organization of the 2014 international congress of UICH, will display to the world how strong and committed you are to our good name.”

According to Mr Zulkefli Hj Sharif, Chief Executive Officer, MyCEB, “I am proud to announce that this Congress will generate approximately RM6.7 million in economic impact and RM4.0 million in visitor expenditure to the country. At MyCEB, we are very supportive of local associations and we encourage collaborations to attract more business events into the country. Through our Industry Partner Programme (IPP), members of which include trade partners such as hotels and meeting venues, MyCEB has been providing co-operative sales and marketing opportunities, sales lead distribution, industry education and training and networking opportunities. This win will be the best opportunity for hotels in the country to showcase its level of service and professionalism, for both business and leisure tourism.”

Mr. Zulkefli also notes, “MyCEB’s proactive approach towards business tourism is also in line with the Bureau’s support towards Tourism Malaysia’s Visit Malaysia Year 2014 campaign as we look towards welcoming the targeted 28 million tourists to Malaysia.”

For more information about the Society of Golden Keys Malaysia, please visit <http://www.uichlesclefsdor.org/article-6322746.html>

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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 International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) 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.

In November 2011, MyCEB unveiled its new tagline, 'Malaysia – Asia's Business Events Hub' which encompasses its aim to communicate Malaysia's proposition as a gateway to Asia for meetings – where many of Asia's diverse cultures, languages and lifestyles are represented and have merged through a long history of trade and meetings.

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

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