

PRESS RELEASE

HOST CITIES 2015 LOOKS FORWARD TO EXPO 2020 DUBAI AS THE 5-YEAR COUNTDOWN BEGINS

23 October 2015 – This week marks exactly five years until the United Arab Emirates (UAE) opens the World Expo in Dubai in 2020, and evolving plans are drawing the attention of leading events experts.

Many will be in Dubai for the Host Cities 2015 summit from 18-19 November at Fairmont the Palm to explore the future of events. With Expo 2020 Dubai plans entering a new chapter, they are set to learn more about the UAE's own preparations for staging one of the largest and most enduring in the global calendar.

The five-year countdown was marked by the UAE National Day at Expo Milano 2015 as Italy prepared to bring its own World Expo to a close. Now the next few months will see a number of exciting developments for Expo 2020 Dubai after plans are ratified in Paris at the General Assembly of the Bureau International des Expositions in November.

How Dubai will use the event to build legacies, develop skills for young people, and engage with the world is of key interest to those attending Host Cities 2015, presented by Emirates Airline. The forward-thinking agenda for the 4th edition of the summit promises to identify trends in strategies for bids, engagement, sponsorship and funding that can be applied to different event types, budgets, cultures and geographies.

Speakers include Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State, Board Representative of Expo 2020 Dubai Higher Committee and Director General, Bureau Expo 2020 Dubai. Talking in Milan, where 1.1 million people have visited the UAE Pavilion, Her Excellency pointed to the opportunity the UAE has "to excite, encourage, enthuse and enthral millions of people from hundreds of countries not just in five years' time, but in the years that follow Expo 2020 Dubai".

The UAE won the right to host the World Expo in Dubai in 2020 by an unprecedented 116 votes in 2013. Running from October 2020 to April 2021 under the theme 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future', it is expected to attract 25 million visits on the eve of the UAE's 50th Golden Jubilee anniversary. Not only will it be the first time a World Expo is hosted in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) region, but it is also expected to be the most international Expo in history, with 70 per cent of visitors coming from abroad.

Preliminary estimates put the economic impact between now and 2021 at approximately US\$19.6 billion. Over 275,000 jobs will be created, in tourism, aviation, construction and real estate, engineering and infrastructure, logistics and transportation, and hospitality and retail. Some 30,000 volunteers will be needed, and a halo effect is expected to leave a transformative social and economic legacy throughout the region.

Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, said: "Five years from today on October 20th, Expo 2020 Dubai will open its gates to the world. Coming at a time of our nation's Golden Jubilee, it is particularly meaningful to have been chosen as the first nation in our region to host a World Expo."

Since the first Great Exhibition of 1851 in London, World Expos have attracted over 1 billion people. Every five years, for six months, pavilions feature cultural events and exhibits of current and future challenges, innovations and cutting edge research by some 250 participating nations, organisations and businesses.

Host Cities 2015 will feature a high-profile line-up of speakers including Lord Sebastian Coe, double Olympic Gold Medalist and former LOCOG & London 2012 Bid Chair, now President of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) and Chairman of the British Olympic Association; Sir Hugh Robertson KCMG DL,

former Olympic Minister, London 2012 and Executive Director, Falcon and Associates; Debbie Jevans, former CEO of England Rugby 2015 and Director of Sport at London 2012; Masanori Takaya, Communications Director, Tokyo 2020; Chinese Olympic Equestrian Alex Hua Tian and Ladies European Tour golfer Emma Carbrera-Bello.

To register and for information about Host Cities 2015 visit www.host-cities.com

For more information about Expo 2020 Dubai visit www.expo2020dubai.ae

-ENDS-

For more information please contact:

Edd Ross

Public Relations Consultant

T: +44 (0) 207 861 3133

E: eross@goodrelations.co.uk