



Press release

Presidents of IH&RA and HOTREC confirm their willingness to collaborate closely in the interest of the hospitality industry worldwide and in Europe

Geneva, 2 June 2009 – Today the President of IH&RA, Dr. Ghassan Aïdi, and the President of HOTREC, Mr. Kent Nyström, agreed on guidelines for an efficient collaboration between IH&RA, HOTREC and their national association members. IH&RA and HOTREC are the strongest organisations speaking on behalf of the private hospitality industry in the world and in Europe.

Dr. Ghassan Aïdi explained: *“Reinforcing our collaboration is vital in these times of crisis, when international arrivals to the various parts of the world dropped by 8,8% in February (vs. February 2008) and showed a very low increase of 1,7% in 2008 (vs. 6,7% in 2007)”*. Mr. Kent Nyström added: *“The figures for Europe are even worse, with a drop of 11,2% of international visitors in February (vs. February 2008) and a stagnation in 2008 (vs. 2007). It is essential that public authorities at all levels focus on bringing back confidence through the provision of a favourable political and regulatory environment, which will allow the economy to recover, growth to flourish and employment to redeploy.”*

IH&RA and HOTREC are responsible for monitoring the developments of measures likely to impact the hospitality sector. They dialogue with the institutions which develop these measures, at international and European levels respectively.

Indeed, public authorities' measures having an impact on the hospitality sector are being issued at various levels (city/state, regional, national/federal, world regions - such as Europe - and international/global). It is crucial to understand that these levels are inter-related, which means that the development of rules at one level may influence the development of rules at other levels. Mr. Nyström gave an example: *“The federal bill currently discussed in the USA in relation to nutritional labelling in certain restaurants needs to be looked at by the European hospitality industry, which is also threatened by a similar measure”*. Dr. Ghassan Aïdi added another example: *“Standardisation activities at international level are inextricably linked with standardisation activities in the various parts of the world, including Europe. If we want to defend efficiently the interests of our industry in Europe and in the world, we need to join forces”*.

IH&RA is the only global Association representing the Hospitality Industry Worldwide. Its members represent more than 200,000 hotels and 6 million restaurants worldwide. More details on www.ih-ra.com

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. It counts 1.6 million businesses, 92% of which are micro-enterprises employing less than 10 people. More details on www.hotrec.eu