

# Global visionaries to headline AIPC milestone conference

In recognition of its 50th anniversary as an association, AIPC (the International Association of Convention Centres) has assembled an "extraordinary and complementary group" of speakers for its upcoming annual conference in Singapore.

AIPC president, Mr Edgar Hirt, said: "It's not often an association gets to commemorate an occasion such as this one, and we want to use it as an opportunity to not simply reflect on where we've been but look forward to how the future will unfold and how we should prepare ourselves to address the related challenges and opportunities.

"The featured speakers...will ensure we have all the stimulation we need to do this, and at the same time give us some unique insights into the rapid business development process in Asia, which will be a huge factor in the future global economy."

The programme will include three globally recognised authorities in their respective fields: Mr James H Gilmore, Professor Kishore Mahbubani and Mr Ho Kwon Ping.

Mr Gilmore is co-founder of Aurora, Ohio-based Strategic Horizons and co-



Among the speakers: Mahbubani and Ho.

author of *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business A Stage*, the book that spawned worldwide interest in experience design, customer experience management and experiential marketing.

His most recent book, *Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want*, contends that businesses must learn to manage authenticity as a distinct business discipline.

Professor Mahbubani is dean and professor in the practice of public policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy of the National University of Singapore.

He is the author of *Can Asians Think? Beyond the Age of Innocence: Rebuilding Trust between America and the World* and

*The New Asian Hemisphere: the Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East*.

He was awarded the Foreign Policy Association Medal in New York in June 2004 and was listed as one of the top 100 public intellectuals in the world by *Foreign Policy and Prospect* magazine in September 2005.

Mr Ho is executive chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings, which manages and has ownership interests in resorts and hotels, spas, retail galleries and golf courses. It aims to be an agent of social and economic development through responsible tourism, demonstrating sustainable practices, caring for the environment and improving the wellbeing of the community.

"These provocative and innovative speakers will provide a springboard for industry-specific sessions where the implications of such global concepts for our own business as international convention centres will be explored," Mr Hirt said.

The 2008 AIPC Annual Conference and 50th General Assembly will take place at Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre from June 28 to July 2. ■

## THE PHILIPPINES

# Private sector gears up for bigger MICE share

By Ollie Quinlivan

The Philippines may finally have a MICE campaign within the year. The Hotel Sales and Marketing Association (HSMA) and the Philippine Association of Convention/Exhibition Organizers and Suppliers (PACEOS) are working together on a marketing campaign targeting small- and medium-sized MICE business from the Asia-Pacific region.

HSMA president and Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila director of marketing, Ms Rose Libongco, said: "The time to revive the MICE campaign is now, while the eyes of the world are focused on Asia. There are new and upcoming MICE destinations in Asia being marketed aggressively, namely Macau, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. It is in this context that the Philippines must make its presence felt."

She cited the key MICE infrastructure build-up in the private sector – such as new convention centres, the influx of more than 3,000 hotel rooms within the

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HSMA president and Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila director of marketing

next three years and the many integrated resort developments – that could facilitate a MICE resurgence.

"Medical and trade associations are now more aggressive in bidding for international conventions to be hosted in the Philippines," she added.

The proposed MICE campaign will cover research, training, package development and promotions. Specific measures include the revival of the convention income survey and the convention utilisa-

tion survey to build a MICE databank; the organisation of training programmes and workshops on MICE marketing and management in key destinations; the development of MICE packages in co-ordination with convention centres, hotels, airlines and PCOs; and a promotional campaign in Asia-Pacific via ads, supplements and collaterals. Other proposed activities include an Asian forum on MICE spearheaded by HSMA and PACEOS and a MICE academy to groom industry professionals.