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17 Finalists in 2003 Edition of AIPC's "Apex Award"

With the preliminary review now completed, AIPC, the International Association of Congress Centres, has announced that there are 17 finalists in this year's Apex Award competition for "World's Best Congress Centre". Finalists are selected on the basis of their ability to meet the entry criteria and subsequently generate the required list of client evaluators whose experiences with each centre will be judged by the Apex Award team led by Professor Jerzy Jaworski of the University of Applied Sciences in Heilbronn, Germany.

The 17 finalists for 2003 are:

- Belfast Waterfront Hall
- Palacio de Congresos y de la Musica de Bilbao
- Festspiel- und Kongresshaus Bregenz
- Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
- Cairns Convention Centre
- Centre International de Conférences Genève - CICG
- Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre (Glasgow)
- Göteborg Convention Centre
- Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre
- Luebeck Music and Congress Centre
- Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre
- Centre des Congrès de Québec
- Riocentro - Rio Convention & Exhibition Center
- Suntec Singapore
- National Palace of Culture, Congress Centre-Sofia
- Valencia Conference Centre
- Austria Center Vienna

"We're very pleased to have received this level of response to the Apex Award competition in a year when so many AIPC members have been occupied by the consequences of global events", said AIPC President Barbara Maple. "It is a tribute to how much centres value this competition and also to the willingness of clients to find time to participate in helping us recognize excellence in industry performance".

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES PALAIS DE CONGRES
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The Apex Award is made annually on the basis of an independent “blind” evaluation process used by Professor Jaworski to ensure an objective analysis of evaluation criteria. These criteria address a series of factors including congress facilities, project management, catering and technical capabilities, and result in a collective score that represents the best overall performer. The evaluation process generates not only a winner but a series of reports which allow each finalist to assess their performance and improve future performance.

The Apex Award winner will be announced on July 9 at this year’s AIPC Annual Conference in Mannheim, Germany. “The evaluation is based entirely on client ratings of each participating facility, so the winner has earned the recognition and respect of both their peers and their customers”, says Maple. Previous Apex Award winners have been the Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre in Canada, the Melbourne Exhibition & Convention Centre in Australia and Congress Innsbruck in Austria.

Founded in 1958, AIPC is a professional, non-profit association of international congress centres devoted to the pursuit of high standards and the recognition of excellence in facility management. With a global network of more than 128 of the world’s leading meeting facilities, its mission is to improve and recognize the quality of management expertise in the areas of operations, finance, technology, staff development, marketing, client relations and environment. It is based in Brussels, Belgium.

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