



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **ITALY MICE MARKET REGISTERS STRONG INTEREST IN MALAYSIA**

Some 65 incentive houses, seven tour operators and 20 media representatives from Italy attended a recent seminar introducing Malaysia as a venue for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions, otherwise known as MICE to industry players. It was conducted by Mr. Amirrudin Abu, Tourism Malaysia Director of Advertising and Publicity, at Terrazza Martini in Milan on 15 April 2008.

The seminar was part of a MICE sales mission he led to Italy and The Netherlands in conjunction with Malaysia's participation in IMEX 2008 in Frankfurt from 22 to 24 April. Other members of the delegation are Malaysia Airlines, Nexus Resort Karambunai (Kota Kinabalu), Mayflower Acme Tours, Discovery Overland Holidays, Synergy Tours and Inno Travel & Tour Services.

The seminar clearly succeeded in its objectives and drew interest from the MICE market in Italy. After attending the seminar, Gianfranco Pintaldi e Angelo Campagnoli of IN&OUT incentive and business travel resolved to propose Malaysia as the only MICE destination for an upcoming incentive group.

Massimo Alboreto, responsible for the incentive branch in Domina Group, noted Malaysia's potential as a MICE venue and was happy for the opportunity to work with Tourism Malaysia and Malaysia Airlines to promote MICE in Malaysia.

A Hotelplan tour operator was also impressed with Malaysia's originality and diversity as a MICE venue, saying, "compared to other countries, Malaysia offers a plethora of things to see and do as every state has its own unique attractions like heritage buildings, eco-tourism activities, top class resorts and breathtaking beaches. This is important as Hotelplan wants to distinguish itself from other tour operators."

Renato Zanghì, director of Reyweb Travel, based in the south of Italy is familiar with Malaysia and what it offers, and said, "We are offering Malaysia as a MICE destination, and the first group will depart next month! The MICE market is growing in Europe and, despite the crisis, the growth rate in Italy is good. Moreover, in the past years, the trend is to organize incentive travels to those countries where customers can find nature as well as culture. So Malaysia, due to its rainforest and people from different cultures, is an original proposal compared to others. Thanks to the collaboration with Tourism Malaysia in Milan and Malaysia Airlines, we can offer the latest products at special prices."

In his presentation, Mr. Amirrudin Abu said, "Malaysia is fast emerging as a preferred venue for MICE events. In terms of MICE, total arrivals in 2007 were 1,000,000, representing 4.8 percent of the total tourist arrivals compared to 820,000 in 2006. Malaysia aims to capture a greater share of the international MICE market -- at least 10% of the arrivals to Malaysia. Towards this end, Tourism Malaysia has developed the Meet & Experience campaign to assist and support potential event planners in organizing, promoting and publicizing events in Malaysia successfully."

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