



Dubai to host Arabal 2008

Dubai, April 15, 2008

Dubai Aluminium Company Limited (Dubal), the seventh largest producer of aluminium in the world and a leading player in the Arabian Gulf, will host the 13th International Arab Aluminium Conference and Exhibition (Arabal 2008).

The event will be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Dubai from November 9 to 12, 2008, and under the patronage of deputy ruler of Dubai, UAE Minister of Finance and chairman of Dubal Shakh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum.

It is expected to attract relevant participants from the aluminium industry in the Gulf region as well as representatives of international aluminium industry players.

Importantly, Arabal 2008 marks the 25th anniversary of Arabal's inception, the inaugural event having been hosted by Kuwait Aluminium Company from October 24 to 26, 1983.

An Arabal Conference and Exhibition has been held every second year since then, with the honour of hosting the prestigious event rotating between the major aluminium producers in the Arab world – namely Kuwait Aluminium, Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), Dubal and the Aluminium Company of Egypt (Egyptal).

Given the rapid growth of the aluminium industry in the region, as evidenced by the new smelter development projects already announced in the UAE (Emirates Aluminium in Abu Dhabi), Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the number of potential ARABAL event hosts is likely to expand directly in the near future.

"We are extremely privileged to be hosting Arabal 2008, and equally proud that we can do so under the patronage of Shaikh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum," said general manager, corporate relations and international affairs and official spokesperson for Dubal Khalid E Buhmaid.

Strong interest already exists regarding the Middle East, reflecting its rapid growth in recent years and potential to become a leading player in the aluminium industry. In 1980, the region contributed 1 per cent of the total world aluminium production.

Today, it accounts for about seven per cent of the 38 million tonnes of metal produced on the world market each year. Moreover, the region is ideally positioned to play an even greater role as a primary producer – especially given the need for additional production capacity created by the increasing demand for the metal worldwide, coupled with the vast energy resources available and convenient location of the Middle East on the world map.

Indeed, leading industry experts believe that, by 2020, the Middle East will produce approximately six million tonnes of aluminium a year (equating to more than 10 per cent of global production); and that, by 2030, the volume produced by the region will rise to about 10 million tonnes.

Already, several major international aluminium companies, such as Rio Tinto Alcan and Hydro, have invested in joint venture smelter developments in the GCC region, specifically in Qatar,

Oman and Saudi Arabia. Current estimates indicate that the number of smelter complexes in the region will increase at least by six over the next decade.

Arabal 2008 will also stimulate commercial opportunities for Dubai by showcasing the city's superb tourism and business infrastructure to an international audience; and will simultaneously demonstrate its innovative and cosmopolitan flair.

According to Bhumaid, the chosen theme for Arabal 2008 is "The Changing Dynamics of the Aluminium Industry in the Gulf Region".

This will be interpreted through a combination of plenary session and panel discussions in the conference component, the content of which will focus on the specific needs of the fast-growing sector. The topics addressed will range from energy and power generation challenges in building smelters; securing bauxite and alumina supplies; project financing; marketing aluminium metal; skills development and training; innovation and product development; responsible aluminium production; emerging trends in the aluminium industry;