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**Terminal operators from across the Middle East to come together at TOC Middle East in September**

Oman has been central to the development of the Middle East ports industry and there could not be a better location to launch the very first TOC Middle East Market Briefing, which is to be held at the Shangri La's Barr Al Jissah Resort and Spa, Oman from 20 - 21 September 2010. The event will draw upon the official support of the Port of Salalah and will fully reflect the significance of what has happened in region over the past decade and its overall impact on the global port industry.

The two-day event, organised by TOC Events Worldwide, will focus on the sudden growth and importance of the Middle East in the maritime sector and leading industry experts will addresses the real issues that have driven the port boom in the region.

**Setting the scene – why the Middle East?**

Port development throughout the Middle East is running at unprecedented levels as governments and investors look towards the future infrastructure needs of this rapidly growing region. The huge increase in container throughput has already driven more than US\$38 billion in port investment and a further US\$40 billion is ready to be poured into port construction across the Arabian Peninsula and neighbouring countries.

The economies of the Middle East are undergoing fundamental change and rising living standards are leading to the growth of a large and prosperous consumer class, who are hungry for imported household goods. Additionally, specialised by-products of the petrochemical industry are generating significant containerised exports from the region. This means trade patterns, container flows and logistics services are all set to evolve into significantly different models from those of the past decade.

Paul Holloway, Event Director of TOC Events Worldwide, commented: “As the Middle East continues to grow, it is becoming one of the success stories of the maritime industry. The growth in the region has been phenomenal and terminals are looking to expand further to meet the growing demand for goods. The Port of Salalah is undergoing rapid expansion and recently announced plans that it will gradually be expanded to reach a total quay length of 8km, while its capacity will grow to 15 million TEUs per annum. Further north, the Port of Sohar is transforming itself into a major industrial and maritime centre serving not only The Sultanate but neighbouring UAE as well.

“We feel the time is right to bring TOC to the Middle East and offer terminal operators in the region a high quality, editorially driven conference that offers up-to-date market information and address the issues that matter most to ports operating in the region. By attending the event, visitors will be able to connect with like-minded professionals, engage in highly educational conference sessions and discover new innovations on the exhibition floor. Our wealth of experience and ability to attract the most influential speakers from across the globe means that TOC Middle East will be *the* show for industry leaders in the area to attend this year.”

### **Debating the issues that matter most – TOC Middle East Conference**

The conference sessions over the two-day show will aim to address the concerns of the market, plus give a focused insight into Middle East trade and the sustainability of new terminals.

Neil Madden the TOC Middle East Conference Editor commented: “Trade in the Middle East has grown in leaps and bounds, but has it been too much too soon? The explosive growth in throughput – from 15 million TEU to 24 million TEU in just four years – has driven a huge amount of port investment, but it is essential that local economies can continue to develop to justify this huge development. One key question, that is on the minds of all operators in the region, is whether local economies continue to consume and generate sufficient cargo to justify all of this terminal space in the coming years?

“We have devised a conference programme that will, amongst other things, discuss the dynamics of port development in the Middle East, offer a unique insight into the major investments in the region and help terminal operators with port master planning. We will also offer delegates an insight into the rebuilding of Iraq’s maritime

infrastructure and whether the Middle East is placing too much focus on container capacity at the expense of bulk and breakbulk handling,” added Neil Madden.

The TOC Middle East conference will feature some of the region’s most influential speakers, including Warith Al Kharusi, Chairman of the Oman Logistics & Supply Chain Association, Lars Oestergaard Nielsen, Managing Director UAE, Qatar and Oman at Maersk Line, Keith Nuttal, Commercial Manager of the Gulftainer Group, and Susanne Milberg of HPC Hamburg Port Consulting. As more and more countries in the region open their doors to global trade, the panellists will deliver insights, opinions and information on the latest and ongoing developments and innovations in the industry.

All attendees to the conference will benefit from the highly informative presentations and discussions on key topics – covering everything from terminal operations and technology, planning, performance and automation through to looking at the workforce, sustainability and the environment.

### **Networking at TOC**

What’s more, conference delegates at TOC Middle East will have a unique opportunity to network with exhibitors, speakers, VIPs and visitors alike. Beginning on the eve of the show with pre-conference drinks, the networking opportunities continue throughout the show with lunch and coffee on the show floor on both Monday and Tuesday, along with a poolside evening reception – sponsored by Moffat & Nichol. The evening of the final day will feature the hugely-popular ‘Happy Hour’ where those attending can mingle for an extra hour after the conference has closed to discuss ideas and opportunities.

### **Show, See, Discuss One-to-One**

A number of leading companies have already signed up as exhibitors and sponsors of the first TOC Middle East Exhibition. The Port of Salalah, Moffatt & Nichol, ABB Crane Systems, Cavotec, Camco Technologies, Prysmian, Terex, Siemens, Konecranes, World Crane Services and Gulftainer are just a selection of the businesses that have chosen to showcase their services and solutions to the high-level visitors that will be present at the event.

As with every TOC event around the globe, there will be a strong terminal operator presence in Oman. APM Terminals, DP World and PSA are all backing the show by

agreeing to be key partners, whilst the Port of Salalah is the official sponsor of the first TOC Middle East.

The exhibition floor will provide visitors with the opportunity to gather market information, develop strategic partnerships and allow exhibitors to secure constructive business deals. For an exhibition floor plan, visit [www.tocevents-me.com](http://www.tocevents-me.com).

“The first ever TOC Middle East is set to be a hugely successful show and will be a must attend event for business leaders and terminal operators within the region. We look forward to welcoming industry professionals from across the Middle East to Oman in September,” Paul Holloway concluded.

For further information on exhibiting or sponsorship opportunities at TOC Middle East or for information on visiting the show please visit [www.tocevents-me.com](http://www.tocevents-me.com) or contact Suzanne Tiago on +44 (0)20 7017 7023.

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