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Middle East Hotel Development Company On-Track for 2,600 Mid-Scale Rooms by 2012

***Kuwait's Action Hotels to Open Almost 2,000 Additional Rooms,
in Four Countries by 2012***

Kuwait City, Kuwait, January 2010: Eight of the region's gateway destinations will be set to service the mid-scale lodging sector with an international brand choice by 2012, according to Action Hotels, a subsidiary of Kuwait's Action Group Holdings.

The company's chairman, His Excellency, Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al Mubarak Al Sabah confirms that nine new properties will join the three already open in Salmiya, Kuwait (2008), Muscat, Oman (2009) and Amman, Jordan (2009).

He said that in 2010, Sharq, Kuwait and Manama, the capital of Bahrain, will see two ibis flags join the mid-scale lodging offering with a 160-room hotel and 304-room mixed-accomodation tower, respectively. The Manama property is just opposite the Kingdom's burgeoning Al Seef commercial and shopping district and will include suites and apartments.

Meanwhile in international markets, Action Hotels also developed the Ibis Glen Waverly in Melbourne, Australia (2007), and confirms the imminent signing of a 250-room Novotel in Brisbane (2011).

According to Sheikh Mubarak, the economy hotel sector is pegged to lead global hospitality development by six percentage points*. He cited WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council) research that suggests that the Middle East tourism sector, for both business and leisure travel, continues to grow by nine per cent (in 2009), as global markets are on a sharp decline.

"Our regional strategy is to cement a leading position in the economy hotel segment," he said.

"We are ahead of the race. The ibis, Holiday Inn and Novotel flags sit perfectly in this lodging gap for business travellers and tourists who 'travel differently' and want a comfortable room and personable proactive service at true value rates."

According to World Tourism Organisation (WTO)* the current economic climate has substantially driven demand for economy hotels by as much as 16 per cent in 2009.

Sheikh Mubarak indicated that with economy air travel to the Middle East up some 13 per cent, demand for good, price-effective, service-efficient lodging is vibrant. He

noted that business class air travel has experienced at least a six percent down turn, in the past year. In addition, intra-regional travel is also growing, and accounts for more than 70 per cent of the room occupancy in Dubai and Bahrain, for example.

“Action Hotels is focussed on the generation of a global portfolio of landmark, affordable hotels of a build that is a notch above the tier guidelines. We look to service niche corporate and tourism traffic in gateway locations within cities, strategic sectors, and primary tourist destinations.”

He confirmed that by 2012, Action Hotels will deliver a portfolio of 14 mid-scale hotels flying the Ibis, Novotel, Holiday Inn and Staybridge flags, in partnership with the global hotel operators Accor and IHG.

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Action Hotels is a private, Middle East-based, global hotel development company established as a subsidiary of Kuwait’s Action Group Holdings KSCC. Its strong partnership with Accor and IHG will see Action Hotels deliver a 14-plus portfolio of strategically-located gateway properties under the Ibis, Novotel, Holiday Inn and Staybridge brands by 2012. Presently, four hotels are trading well, one each in Melbourne, Australia (2007), Salmiya, Kuwait (2008), Muscat, Oman (2009) and Amman, Jordan (2009), with Sharq, Kuwait and Manama, Bahrain both on schedule to open in 2010. www.actionhotels.com
