

News Release: Dailies; online; Investment, Real Estate, Tourism, Construction

## **InterContinental Hotels Group's Holiday Inn moves into Seeb**

**Kuwait's Action Hotels and Oman's Al Rawahi International secure contracting agreement; second property in capital for Action as Oman features in development plan**

**Sultanate of Oman May 2010:** Muscat's busy airport and business district, Seeb will be home to a new 176-room Holiday Inn hotel next year, according to His Excellency Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al Mubarak Al Sabah, chairman, Action Hotels.

He said that the Holiday Inn Seeb Muscat is on track to open in December (2011) following the securing of the contracting agreement with Muscat-based Al Rawahi International.

"Oman is committed to developing the hospitality sector and Action Hotels is equally as committed to playing a role in this development with a fixed eye on the mid-scale segment," Sheikh Mubarak said.

He said that with a vision for three hotels in Oman, Action Hotels is currently one of the leading regional investors in the Sultanate. "Oman is an important destination in our region-wide expansion programme," he stated.

By 2012, the Action Hotels will add more than 2,000 mid-scale rooms across key Middle East gateways, three of which will fly InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) flags comprising one Staybridge property and two Holiday Inn hotels. Holiday Inn is the leading midscale hotel brand of IHG, the world's largest hotel company by number of rooms. In 2007, IHG announced the US\$1 billion re-launch of Holiday Inn to ensure improved quality and consistency in more than 4,000 hotels worldwide by the end of 2010.

Al Rawahi's chairman, Sheikh Salim Said Hamed Al Rawahi confirmed that his team will deliver to the brand's evolved guidelines. "We are ready to deliver the Holiday Inn Seeb Muscat to meet Holiday Inn global brand guidelines in line with IHG's and His Excellency's vision," Mr Al Rawahi stated.

Sheikh Mubarak explained that the Seeb property will stand as an example of an Action Hotels development, which is focused on the generation of a global portfolio of landmark, mid-scale hotels that respect the global brand standards.

"The Holiday Inn Seeb Muscat represents another step in our frontier foray into the burgeoning midscale hotel sector pegged to lead global hospitality development by six percentage points," he said.

IHG's Kirk Kinsell, president EMEA said that the group looks forward to further strengthening its partnership with Action Hotels through its third IHG-managed property, following on from the Holiday Inn Seef and the Staybridge Dana Tower in Bahrain. Sheikh Mubarak confirmed that both properties are scheduled to open in the Kingdom in 2012.



**ACTION HOTELS** “IHG opened its first hotel in Oman 33 years ago and since then we have continued to invest in the Sultanate, building on our rich heritage to become one of the leading hotel operators in the country. Today we have six existing properties and three more hotels under development. These figures signify our continued investment in the growth and development of Oman’s tourism sector and its position as a leading leisure destination.

“The Holiday Inn Seeb further extends our brand portfolio and illustrates our commitment to providing our business and leisure guests with more choice, convenience and value for money,” Kinsell said.

“We are ahead of the race and the Holiday Inn Seeb Muscat sits perfectly in this lodging gap for business and leisure travellers who ‘travel differently’ and want a comfortable room and personable proactive service at true value rates.

“This property fits perfectly into our development criteria. We are looking to service niche corporate and tourism traffic in gateway locations within cities, specialist zones, and icon tourist destinations. The Holiday Inn Seeb Muscat will deliver all of these elements and more,” Sheikh Mubarak concluded.

The Seeb property is located just a short drive from Seeb International Airport, and within minutes of what is considered to be some of Muscat’s prime commercial and leisure areas.

Kuwait-based Action Hotels presently operates three properties in the region in the mid scale and also economy segment, in Al Khwair-Muscat, Amman-Jordan and Salmiya-Kuwait. The group’s fourth property – and second in Kuwait, is scheduled to open in September (2010) in Sharq district.

End

**Photo caption:** Muscat-based Al Rawahi International will build the 180-room Holiday Inn Seeb Muscat for Action Hotels. Pictured from right: Kirk Kinsell, president EMEA, IHG; His Excellency Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al Mubarak Al Sabah, chairman, Action Hotels; Al Rawahi’s chairman, Sheikh Salim Said Hamed Al Rawahi; John Bamsey, COO IHG MENA.

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**About Action Hotels**

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](http://www.actionhotels.com)

### About Holiday Inn

Holiday Inn is one of the most recognised hotel brands with a global reputation for service, comfort and value. It offers today's business and leisure travellers dependability, friendly service and modern attractive facilities at an excellent value and at convenient locations throughout the world.

Launched in 1952, there are currently 1,313 Holiday Inn properties across the world, equating to 239,559 rooms, with 321 hotels in the development pipeline. There are 31 Holiday Inn properties in the Middle East and Africa, with 12 more hotels scheduled to open over the next 3-5 years.

Holiday Inn is undergoing the biggest relaunch in the hospitality industry, with a multi million investment across more than 3,200 hotels and 430,000 rooms worldwide. Relunched hotels are already feeling the benefits, with an average 3-7% improved RevPaR and increased guest satisfaction levels. Two thirds of the global Holiday Inn estate (2,000 hotels) is now relaunched, with the remaining properties are on track to complete by the end of 2010. So far, we have relaunched 23 hotels (74%) in the Middle East and Africa and are committed to completing the relaunch by the end of 2010.

More further information, please visit the website: [www.holidayinn.com](http://www.holidayinn.com)

### About IHG

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) [LON:IHG, NYSE:IHG (ADRs)] is the world's largest hotel group by number of rooms. IHG franchises, leases, manages or owns, through various subsidiaries, over 4,400 hotels and more than 650,000 guest rooms in 100 countries and territories around the world. The Group owns a portfolio of well recognised and respected hotel brands including InterContinental Hotels & Resorts, Hotel Indigo, Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts, Holiday Inn Hotels and Resorts, Holiday Inn Express, Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites and also manages the world's largest hotel loyalty programme, Priority Club Rewards with 48 million members worldwide. IHG has 1,300 hotels in its development pipeline, which will create 160,000 jobs worldwide over the next few years.

InterContinental Hotels Group PLC is the Group's holding company and is incorporated in Great Britain and registered in England and Wales.

IHG offers information and online reservations for all its hotel brands at [www.ihg.com](http://www.ihg.com) and information for the Priority Club Rewards programme at [www.priorityclub.com](http://www.priorityclub.com). For the latest news from IHG, visit our online Press Office at [www.ihg.com/media](http://www.ihg.com/media)