

## Press Release

22 November 2011

### **AETTA held its VIIIth Biennial Congress in Rome**

Association of European Travel and Tourist Agencies (AETTA) held its VIIIth Biennial Congress on November 16-18, 2011 in Rome. This high-profile event brought together 374 delegates representing 312 AETTA members as well as a number of invited guests and speakers.

Following the established agenda of AETTA's Biennial Congress the delegates discussed the state of AETTA, its development needs and approved the budget of the Association for the next two years. During the opening ceremony Helmut Messner, Secretary General of AETTA, noted "AETTA is committed to maintain its independent status. The Association was created by European tourism market actors and has worked and will work entirely in their interests. Our ultimate goal is to make sure that our members operate and develop their business in the framework of faire competition and supportive regulatory environment."

Overall the Congress proved time and time again as a crucial instrument for exchanging ideas and building relationships among AETTA members and making sure that the course taken by the Association is well supported by all its members. The atmosphere of the event can best be described by the words of one of the participants Carlos Rodriguez from *CR Viaje de Exquisita*: "I feel myself here not only among my fellow AETTA members but also among my friends. It is an unparalleled networking event, which allows me to create long-lasting working relationships with my peers and stay up to date on the latest issues related to the European tourism sector."

A number of panels and round tables were organized around general and specific topics such as tourism regulation in Europe, development of railway infrastructure, specifics of health and safety regulations in tourism with application to marine and air travel, security norms in European hotels, development of cross-border tourism in Europe as well as a number of other topics of interest to the delegates.

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Note to the Editor: Association of European Travel and Tourist Agencies (AETTA) brings under one roof over one thousand travel and tourist agencies working in Europe or serving European destinations. Each year these collectively serve 8.5 million clients, generate a total turnover of some €4.7 billion and employ directly 22 000 people.

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