

## **Citizen ID Forum in Abu Dhabi an outstanding success: The first global summit on eID documents in the Middle East boasts record attendance and beats previous three editions of the event**

*Milan, March 5, 2008* – Wise Media’s Citizen ID Forum opened its doors in Abu Dhabi on February 25 under the patronage of UAE Minister of Interior H.H. Sheik Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The first edition of the event in the Middle East proved to be an overwhelming success with 316 high-profile participants from 37 countries attending the two-day conference and exhibition.

Following the previous editions in Berlin and Rome (2005), Paris and Milan (2006), Istanbul and Milan (2007) the seventh summit on government-driven citizen ID programs opened its doors in the United Arab Emirates building on the wealth of experience of Wise Media’s Electronic Passport Forum and Citizen ID Forum initiatives. The event took place with the endorsement of the European Commission, Emirates Identity Authority and Abu Dhabi Police.

Once again the event substantiated the fact that it is the platform of choice for experts from government, border control and law enforcement, as well as technology vendors, to discuss and learn more about the key issues relating to the introduction of digital citizen identity credentials worldwide. Among the highlights of the event, a panel of GCC government representatives focused on the significant efforts made by the public authorities in the Middle East to promote and encourage the use of ICT in the government and public sectors in the Arab world.

H.E. Eng. Sultan Saeed Nasser Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy UAE:

*“The Citizen ID Forum highlights how the objectives that governments strive to meet via the digitalization of ID documents go far beyond homeland security. They are much more related to creating a means of delivering better services to both national and non-national residents.”*

Dr. Frank Paul, Head of Unit “Large-scale IT systems” – European Commission:

*“The European Commission has endorsed Wise Media’s event since its first edition in Berlin. We have always seen the great value of this initiative in bringing together government representatives and security experts from around the world to discuss the issues and opportunities related to the digitalization of citizen ID documents.”*

H.E. Darwish Ahmed Al Zaraouni, Director General – Emirates Identity Authority:

*“This was an immensely useful forum that truly brought together the representatives of all countries in our region to discuss the introduction and evolution of digital ID documents. Of course, there are also official meetings happening at government level, but both the opportunity to develop the discussions in a different ambience than our formal working environment and the exposure to the experiences of other governments worldwide make this a unique knowledge-sharing platform that we are delighted to support, also in the future.”*

Brig. Ahmed N. Al Raisi, General Director – Abu Dhabi Police:

*“We are very satisfied with our decision to endorse Wise Media’s event as it really gave us the opportunity to see the best technologies available today for the creation of durable biometrics-enabled documents, cutting edge data collection and border control systems, as well as identity management solutions. It was indeed an outstanding event from our perspective.”*

Dr. Khalid M. Al Tawil, Director General – National Information Center Saudi Arabia:

*“Wise Media’s efforts in organizing the Citizen ID Forum promote the sharing of ideas and encourage government cooperation in the field of digital citizen ID documents. Providing a secure authenticated identity for every citizen will help us provide better, faster and more reliable secure governmental and non-governmental services and thereby enhance global security.”*

Martin Schallbruch, Chief Information Officer – German Federal Ministry of the Interior:

*“The German Federal Ministry of Interior has participated in the Citizen ID Forum over the years and we are glad to have attended this year’s well-organized and independent initiative as well in order to share our experience and exchange views with other governments.”*

Patricia Sobol, Program Manager, Office of Field Operations – Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, US Department of Homeland Security:

*“Congratulations on a very successful conference. As an attendee, I am very appreciative of all your efforts. The presenters were quite impressive, and the information shared very valuable.”*

Ali M. Al Khouri, Assistant Director General for Central Operations – Emirates Identity Authority:

*“One of the very best conferences ever held in the United Arab Emirates.”*

Tate Preston, Vice President, Sales & Marketing – iDcentrix Inc (USA):

*“Thank you for a successful conference! I had no idea what to expect when I booked some very long flights to get to Abu Dhabi, and was delighted about the decision to attend. I have been to card-related conferences all over the world, and agree that you have created a very unique and intimate setting for industry and government officials to get to know one another. I made some very good connections at the conference, and look forward to following up with them as we seek to grow our business.”*

The Citizen ID Forum welcomed an array of world-class panelists to review the status of the progressive digitalization of Passports, as well as National IDs, Driver’s Licenses, Health Cards, Resident Permit Cards and Visas worldwide. These included representatives of the UAE Ministry of Interior, the UAE Minister of Economy, the Saudi Arabian National Information Center, the Egyptian Civil Service Organization, the Royal Oman Police, Qatar’s Ministry of Interior, Abu Dhabi Police, the Emirates Identity Authority, the Saudi Arabian Council of Cooperative Health Insurance, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, the British Forensic Science Service, Pakistan’s National Database & Registration Authority, the European Commission, the German Federal Ministry of the Interior and the US Department of Homeland Security

The Citizen ID Forum was sponsored by EDAPS Consortium, Sagem Sécurité, Thales and Emirates Bank.

The valuable discussions that took place in Abu Dhabi will continue at the Citizen ID Forum conference at the ID WORLD International Congress, the annual world summit on automatic identification, in Milan on November 18-20, 2008.

**About the Citizen ID Forum**

The Citizen ID Forum is a vertical event of the ID WORLD International Congress, focusing on the evolution of government-driven citizen ID programs. After the success of the events in Berlin and Rome (2005), Paris and Milan (2006), Istanbul and Milan (2007), endorsed by the European Commission, the French Ministry of the Interior, the German Ministry of the Interior, the Italian Ministry of the Interior and the Turkish Ministry of Interior, the Citizen ID Forum took place for the first time in the Middle East in Abu Dhabi on February 25 and 26, 2008 under the patronage of the Minister of Interior of the UAE, H. H. Sheik Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan and with the endorsement of the European Commission, Emirates Identity Authority and Abu Dhabi Police. For further information visit: [www.citizen-id.com](http://www.citizen-id.com)

**About ID WORLD Events**

ID WORLD is the first global technology-agnostic initiative on automatic identification addressing all vertical markets of RFID and AIDC systems, biometrics and smart cards. Organized by Wise Media, ID WORLD events focus on segments in which automatic identification expresses its revolutionary potential. Alongside the annual world summit ID WORLD International Congress, Wise Media organizes the following vertical forums: Electronic Passport Forum, Citizen ID Forum, Global Security Forum, Asset Tracking Forum, Registered Traveler Forum and Transportation Security Forum. For further information on the annual world summit visit: [www.idworldonline.com](http://www.idworldonline.com)

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