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Volkswagen, Siemens and Rotana Team up in Desert Cleaning Drive

Joined effort to raise public awareness of the littering problem affecting the environment

Dubai, UAE 11 March 2012 – Two world-class German brands, Siemens and Volkswagen, and Rotana, the leading hotel management company in the Middle East and Africa, have joined forces in an environmental awareness drive. The 'Clean the Desert' initiative aims at raising public consciousness of the littering problem in the desert, the grave consequences it has to local wildlife and the importance of a clean environment. On Saturday 17 March the three companies will take teams of volunteers out into the desert to clear an area of trash, disposing of it in a safe and environmentally friendly manner.

Commenting on the initiative, Stefan Mecha, managing director, Volkswagen Middle East said: "The 'Clean the Desert' project focuses on preserving the desert and actively taking care of local wildlife, believing that it is the everyday small actions that can bring about the big changes the environment needs. It is great to team up with Siemens and Rotana on this initiative as both companies share our concern about the serious issue of littering and the need to do something about it."

Siemens and Volkswagen have had a long history of collaboration in the development of parts, technology and processes, and focusing on eco-friendly initiatives. In their most recent joint initiative Volkswagen provided mobility solutions for Siemens employees that help drive environmental awareness and behavioural changes in the Middle East.

"The 'Clean the Desert' campaign emphasises our commitment to raising awareness, encouraging the public to be more environmentally conscious in the sensible disposal of garbage and waste," said Erich Kaeser, CEO of Siemens Middle East. "Wildlife is greatly affected by the changes in the ecosystem of the desert and through this initiative Siemens and Volkswagen are reinforcing their commitment to a cleaner and safer environment in the desert.

"Siemens' philosophy has always been underlined with a devotion to sustainability and developing the next green technology, which is apparent in our close work with Masdar City and in our new offices featuring the latest in energy saving technology", Erich Kaeser added.

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“Everyday a tragedy is taking place in our deserts, along the beaches, and in the mountains of the UAE. Camels, sheep, goats and cattle, as well as the protected Arabian Oryx, the Sand Gazelles and other wildlife are dying after ingesting plastic and other waste materials that are being dumped in the desert,” said Thomas Tapken, Area Vice President, Rotana Dubai & Northern Emirates. “Rotana has a longstanding commitment to sustainable practices and environmental awareness for the aim to maximize benefits and minimize harm to our earth,” concluded Tapken.

The campaign will be supported by the PlasticNotSoFantastic initiative, the online community expataktuell.de, averda international recycling, KTM and Uschi Musch’s camel farm.

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Notes to editor:

Volkswagen: Volkswagen Middle East in late 2011 announced its “Think Blue” campaign to be launched shortly in the Middle East. “Think Blue” embodies Volkswagen’s goal of creating environmentally friendly products and solutions, encouraging the public to be more eco-conscious and contribute to a sustainable future. “Think Blue” is a concept that encourages being more responsible on the road, and more environmentally conscious in everyday life. Volkswagen Middle East also participated in the Asia Pacific Natural Gas Vehicle Associates (ANGVA) Green Highway 2011 event held in Dubai. The Green Highway project is dedicated to raising awareness for the importance of fulfilling the vision of making natural gas and energy efficient cars available. As the “People’s car,” Volkswagen has a number of technologies available, including hybrid and electric solutions using Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), a key propriety within its sustainability strategy. Please also register on the Volkswagen international press website at www.volkswagen-media-services.com

Siemens: With global expertise and a strong local presence, Siemens works with customers here in the region to enhance the efficiency of existing power generation plants via modernisation techniques which achieve reductions in CO2 output. Siemens also recently announced a world record in power plant efficiency with the 8000H gas turbine, achieving an efficiency rating of 60.75%. Siemens’ other partnerships in the region include its collaboration with Masdar to lower its carbon footprint by optimising the technical and economic aspects of environmentally friendly post-combustion carbon capture and storage. At this year’s World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi, where Siemens showcased their real sustainability solutions portfolio for the region, Siemens and Masdar Institute signed an agreement for solar technology development in the Middle East.

Rotana Hotel Management: Rotana currently manages a portfolio of over 70 properties throughout the Middle East & Africa with an aggressive expansion plan in place. Rotana has chosen to acknowledge how precious time is by making all time spent in their range of hotels ‘Treasured Time’. This means Rotana has pledged to understand and meet the individual needs of all guests. In so doing, Rotana has evolved its product brands to include, Rotana Hotels & Resorts, Centro Hotels by Rotana, Rayhaan Hotels & Resorts by Rotana and Arjaan Hotel Apartments by Rotana. Treasured Time. The Rotana promise to you.

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Further information on any Rotana property, its brands or reservations can be obtained by visiting rotana.com or by contacting one of the regional sales offices.

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