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**Report by Norbert Bargmann, Managing Director of Messe München GmbH at  
the Year-End Press Conference on 16 December 2008 in Munich  
– Summary –**

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At the Year-End Press Conference for 2008, Managing Director Norbert Bargmann reported on business at the International Congress Centre Munich (ICM). He said:

"The International Congress Center Munich (ICM) celebrated its tenth anniversary by turning in the best-ever results: Over 170,000 visitors took part in 2008 in one of the 151 national and internationally acclaimed congresses and events in the ICM, which is a new visitor record. In addition, the ICM achieved sales of over nine million euros, which is the second-best economic result of the past ten years. The year closed significantly above forecast."

A decisive factor in this outstanding achievement was once again the direct physical link between the congress centre and the exhibition halls. Thanks to this close integration, Munich as a venue for congresses and trade fairs could offer its customers capacities and competences matched by few other destinations in Europe.

Norbert Bargmann spoke about how this 'pole position' had been successfully exploited for the cardiologists' congress in 2008. Thanks to the organisational and creative resources of the ICM and the exhibition centre, it had been possible to both

master the logistical challenges involved in the ESC Congress and manage the high number of delegates.

Taking part in this "best European cardiologists' congress of all time", to quote Alan J. Howard, CEO of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), speaking after the highly successful cardiologists congress in 2008, were over 30,500 medics from over 130 countries. In the fully booked halls at the ICM, and eight further exhibition halls in the trade-fair centre – a total of over 100,000 square metres of space – the participants had spent four days discussing the latest findings from research and treatment methods.

Another key factor in the great success of the ESC Congress in Munich, according to Bargmann, was without doubt the partnership that existed here – unique in Europe – between the City of Munich, the airport, the hotels and restaurants, taxi associations and the ICM, both before and during the congress. With the diverse city-marketing activities and the added value that was on offer, the ICM had far exceeded the already high expectations of the ESC that had built up following their successful congress at the centre in 2004. In particular, stressed the organiser of the cardiologists' congress, the international congress delegates had appreciated and been especially impressed by the many signs of welcome, visible to all the cardiologists, displayed around the city.

Bargmann: "This clear vote of approval from the ESC is also our basis for Munich's renewed bid to host Europe's largest medical congress again: Together with our partners we will bring this congress back to Munich again in the coming years – and perhaps even attract it as a regular customer."

Internationally acclaimed reference events such as the ESC Congress, explained Bargmann, were impressive proof that since the opening of the International Congress Centre, the destination of Munich had now positioned itself firmly in the very top league in the international congress and meetings sector.

A glance at the ICM calendar of events illustrated this development very clearly, said Bargmann. In the first half of 2008 the ICM had had virtually one event after the



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other. Scientific congresses and trade conferences had been on the programme, along with the annual general meetings of leading companies, including major insurance companies, and exclusive events focusing on future-oriented high technology – among the latter OOP 08, DATE 08, the Photovoltaic Technology Show 2008 Europe and WiMAX World 2008.

The high point of the second half of the year had without doubt been the ESC Congress, which was embedded in a string of high-calibre trade congresses and corporate events, such as the Security Fair Munich, the FISITA World Automotive Congress, the Annual Conference of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM), Medientage and the VDE Congress on 'Zukunftstechnologien: Innovationen – Märkte – Nachwuchs' (Future-oriented technologies: Innovations – Markets – Young talents').

Bargmann pointed out that the participants in all these high-ranking congresses and conferences each spent on average a sum of around 400 euros per day, according to the findings of a recent study. Thus the cardiologists' congress in 2008, which attracted over 30,500 delegates, had brought a (statistically proven) influx of spending to the City of Munich and surrounding region of at least 70 million euros in just four days.

Against a background of these key ratios, it was all the more pleasing that the ICM is also very well set up for business in 2009. As well as long-standing customers such as Linde AG (2000 expected participants), Münchener Rück AG (4500 expected participants) and OOP (2000 expected participants), a number of new customers had also secured their slot in the ICM events calendar, with events such as the Tetra World Congress 2009 (2500 expected participants) and the German Dentists' Day (3000 expected participants).

The ICM is aiming to further expand this success in the coming years, and secure it for the long term, said Bargmann. The ICM and its partners would therefore remain tireless in their efforts to create the very best conditions for organisers of major events and their customers at the congress and trade-fair destination of Munich.



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Mr Bargmann believed that the subject of hotel capacities would be one of the challenges to be faced in the coming years. For example, a further expansion of the alliance with Munich hotels that has been a success for many years, could contribute to a sustainable improvement in the international competitiveness of the destination of Munich.

Changing customer requirements in terms of spatial facilities were prompting the ICM and the trade fair centre to earmark more and more flexible break-out rooms for events.

For many international organisers the question of Munich's accessibility by air was still very important – the city's efficient public transport network and good transport links had proven in many instances to be a critical criterion in the success of major congresses.

As Bargmann explained, the international price differential would also be a topic in the globalised congress and conference market: It would remain to be seen how the ICM positioned itself as regards price-performance alongside congress centres like Barcelona, Stockholm and Vienna.

And, last but not least, competition from within Munich, was playing an increasing role – new and extended conference capacities at BMW Welt, in the Gasteig and in the Olympiapark were noticeably increasing competition and price pressure on the ICM in the city. But they also provided the opportunity of bringing more business to Munich, as part of a cooperative acquisition effort.

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### **About the International Congress Centre Munich (ICM)**

ICM, the International Congress Centre Munich, is one of the leading congress and convention destinations in Germany and Europe thanks to its modern architecture and first-rate amenities. Located adjacent to the New Munich Trade Fair Centre, and with a direct covered link to it, the ICM offers planners tremendous flexibility and scope for organising events of all kinds. As an independent profit centre of Messe München GmbH, the International Congress Centre Munich promotes its services and facilities to customers in the German and European meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions market. The ICM also acts as a platform for the academic and scientific programmes and congresses accompanying the events held at the New Munich Trade Fair Centre, organised by Messe München.

### **Messe München International (MMI)**

Messe München International (MMI, Munich Trade Fairs International Group) is one of the world's leading trade-fair companies. It organises around 40 trade fairs for capital and consumer goods, and key high-tech industries. Each year over 30,000 exhibitors from more than 100 countries, and over two million visitors from more than 200 countries take part in the events in Munich. In addition, MMI organises trade fairs in Asia, Russia, the Middle East and South America. With six subsidiaries abroad – in Europe and in Asia – and with 66 foreign representatives serving 89 countries, MMI has a truly global network.

For **additional information** and **photos** to download, go to: [www.icm-muenchen.de](http://www.icm-muenchen.de)

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