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## **BHN Launches Central America Tourism & Hotel Investment Exchange (CATHIE)**

COSTA MESA, California --- Burba Hotel Network (BHN) has announced the creation of a new, annual hotel and tourism investment conference in Central America, according to Jim Burba, president of BHN. The Central America Tourism & Hotel Investment Exchange (CATHIE) will debut in Guatemala City, Guatemala in the spring of 2008. Specific dates and venue will be announced in mid-summer 2007. CATHIE will focus on hotel and tourism investment opportunities in the seven Central American countries. The Foreign Investment Advisory Service (FIAS) of The World Bank Group is supporting the event, and the following countries have committed to becoming patrons of CATHIE: Guatemala (Invest in Guatemala), Honduras (FIDE Honduras), El Salvador (PROESA), and Nicaragua (ProNicaragua). Additional countries are expected to join the effort shortly as CATHIE patrons.

About CATHIE, Burba said "After several years in the planning stages, we are delighted to announce the creation of this important, new, annual investment event for Central America, and indeed for the global hotel and tourism industry. An important feature of CATHIE is the active involvement of the national investment promotion agencies in the region, and the showcasing of new and exciting investment opportunities from each of the participating countries." "A full conference program will run along side an active networking/exhibit hall and one-to-one meetings with the promoters of new projects and the CATHIE delegates," Burba added.

Damien Shiels, of FIAS/World Bank said, "The Foreign Investment Advisory Service of the World Bank is pleased to be cooperating with Central America and BHN in this effort. Investment interest in the Central American tourism sector has increased significantly over the past two years as the region has experienced some of the highest tourist arrival growth rates around the world. The respective governments have declared the sector a high priority. Therefore, the scene appears to be set for a further increase in interest and investment." Added Shiels, "CATHIE will provide a first-of-its-kind opportunity for both local and foreign investors to explore business ventures in this promising environment."

BHN brings together more than two decades of experience in developing and organizing the world's most prominent gatherings of the hotel and tourism investment community. At these events, over 55 conferences completed and/or in development, the investment community has come together to network, conduct business and to learn about the latest trends. They have become "must attend" events for those interested in hospitality real estate.

In addition to CATHIE, BHN events include: the Americas Lodging Investment Summit (ALIS) in Los Angeles; the International Hotel Investment Forum (IHIF) in Berlin; the Bolsa Mexicana de Inversión Inmobiliaria y Turística (BMIIT) in Mexico City; the Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific (HICAP) in Hong Kong; the PATA Summit in Thailand; and the Puerto Rico Tourism Investment Conference in San Juan.

The BHN website at [www.BURBA.com](http://www.BURBA.com) is the gateway for information about the conferences BHN produces, as well as a direct link to important players in the hospitality investment world.