CFA Institute concludes 2010 Middle East Investment Conference

Calls for further commitment to professional standards and ethics following global financial crisis

Bahrain, 23 March 2010 - Final – CFA Institute, the global association of investment professionals, together with CFA Bahrain Society, has today concluded its first Middle East Investment Conference.

Hosted in Manama, Bahrain, the event attracted over 200 investment professionals from around the Middle East, Europe, USA and Asia to discuss some of the most prominent issues affecting the investment and financial sectors, both globally and regionally, in the wake of the global financial crisis.

A number of prominent local and international speakers highlighted a range of topics which included global strategies and outlooks, regional challenges and opportunities, private equity and risk management in the current market place.

Referring to the continued growth of the regional market, Mr. Nitin Mehta, Managing Director, CFA Institute Europe, Middle East, and Africa, said, “This region is attracting some of the best investment professionals from around the world. We could triple the number of CFA charterholders in the Middle East over the next decade, up from nearly a thousand today. This anticipated increase reflects the expected growth in the economy, further development of the regional financial centres and the planned investment in education. However, emerging out of the global financial crisis, an emphasis on ethics and professional conduct needs to be renewed to regain investor confidence and trust.”

CFA Institute is actively engaging with regulators and policy makers throughout the region to improve professional standards; an initiative with the Emirates Securities and Commodities Authority (ESCA) on investment education, collaboration with the Saudi Stock Exchange in promoting best practice for financial analysis, and co-operation with Hawkamah on corporate governance, provide some examples.

Mr. Mehta called for businesses to remain committed to the highest standards of ethics, education and professional excellence. He called for improved corporate governance and transparency, more investor education, better investor protection, and greater regulatory development.

He concluded: “As financial centers across the region continue to grow, we need to instill the right culture of integrity and trust in financial services. One way that many governments around the world are doing this is by working alongside organisations such as CFA Institute to help develop suitable codes of ethics to support the process. Recent events have shown that the relevance of an internationally recognised designation as evidence of professional knowledge has never been stronger, with national governments and the global business community increasingly seeing the need for qualifications, such as the CFA Program, to provide a clear set of standards and principles for their financial markets.”
Copies of all presentations made at the conference are available to download from CFA Institute website on www.cfainstitute.org/INSERT

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Notes to Editor

About CFA Institute
CFA Institute is the global association for investment professionals. It administers the CFA and CIPM curriculum and exam programs worldwide; publishes research; conducts professional development programs; and sets voluntary, ethics-based professional and performance-reporting standards for the investment industry. CFA Institute has nearly 100,000 members, who include the world’s 86,300 CFA charterholders, in 133 countries and territories, as well as 137 affiliated professional societies in 58 countries and territories. More information may be found at www.cfainstitute.org