



"To prevent and combat insurance fraud and insurance related financial crime worldwide"

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Press Release

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Annual Conference of the International Association of Insurance Fraud Agencies (IAIFA)

Lisbon, Portugal The Annual Conference of the International Association of Insurance Fraud Agencies (IAIFA) took place in Lisbon during the 10-11th Sept 2007, under the theme "Fact or Fiction" and hosted by the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Portugal (Instituto de Seguros de Portugal) and the Insurance Association of Portugal (Associação Portuguesa de Seguradores –APS).

The Conference has discussed several insurance fraud issues including Policing the Perimeters, Insurance Fraud in Portugal, Special Investigation Units, Financial Investigative Units, Building Sound Insurance Infrastructure in Developing Countries, Prevention of Fraud and Money Laundering in Financial Institutions, and How Supervisors tackle Fraud on Insurers.

Dr. Bassel Hindawi, President of the International Association of Insurance Fraud Agencies (IAIFA) and Director General of the Insurance Commission of Jordan, announced in his opening speech that the Association will be relocated to Geneva, Switzerland. This will give the Association a more official and international image and contribute to increasing its efficiency. He also pointed out that the Executive Committee will be expanded to include representatives from the insurance industry from the different regions of the world, in order to give the Association a global dimension and enhance its effectiveness.

Dr. Hindawi also stated: "Data-sharing, exchange of information and sharing best practices about the most effective counter-fraud techniques should be one of the priorities for the insurance industry

in collaboration with insurance regulatory authorities and law enforcement agencies. This shortens the learning curve for everyone and helps ensure the industry as a whole moves forward to become increasingly effective at preventing and detecting fraud".

In addition, the President of IAIFA declared that a work plan for the future development IAIFA has been approved, focusing on the process and procedures to be taken by the Association to meet the challenges and to achieve progress and set specific goals. In particular, to provide a global resource to stem the effects of insurance fraud, the establishment of a permanent Secretariat, restructuring the Executive Committee, restructuring of Committees, strengthening the financing structure of IAIFA, and enhancing cooperation with other international organizations.

In order to implement the work plan, new By-Laws have been approved by the membership. Dr. Hindawi stated that the Association is embarking on a challenging endeavor in terms of organizational as well as functional issues, in order to more effectively combat insurance fraud and to create a shared database for the benefit of members. He added: "What distinguishes this Association is the fact it is a specialized international organization that encompasses in its membership insurance regulatory authorities, law enforcement agencies, insurance industry, and any entity or international organization with an interest in the insurance business".

Mr. Rodrigo Lucena, Member of the Board of Directors, Insurance Regulatory Authority of Portugal, in his welcome remarks at the opening session has synthesized on the need of detecting, preventing and managing insurance fraud as it plays a central role in the insurance sector and its supervision, stating that insurance fraud could have a direct financial impact as well as indirect effect on cost.

He also added: " ...greater attention has been given in Portugal by the public authorities to the fight against terrorist financing and money laundering, specifically through its participation in the Finacial Action Task Force". On the other hand, Mr. Lucena stated that a Fraud Commission has been created by the Portuguese Insurers Association, in response to the need for the sharing of the best practices in the prevention and detection of fraud, especially in the sectors of Health, Housing and Motor.

A new Executive Committee was elected at the meeting. The new Committee includes Carlos Belgrave, Supervisor of Insurance, Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs, (Barbados), Robert F. Craig, Attorney, (USA), Dr. Bassel Hindawi, Director General of the Insurance Commission, (Jordan), Rodrigo Fernandes Lucena, Member of the Board of Directors, Instituto de Seguros de Portugal, (Portugal), Antonio Jose Felix Pontes, Executive Director, Monetary Authority of Macau, (China), Garry Potts, Head of Fraud, Investigations & ERGA Systems, Insurance Australia Group (IAG), (Australia.).

In addition, the Executive Committee re-elected Dr. Bassel Hindawi, as the President and Mr. Robert Craig as the Vice President for the next 2 years.

Editor Note:

The International Association of Insurance Fraud Agencies (IAIFA), was established in 1986 aiming to co-ordinate the efforts, training and education of law enforcement agencies, government bodies, and the insurance industry to move more effectively prevent and combat insurance fraud worldwide.

IAIFA members include Insurance Regulatory Authorities, Insurance Fraud Bureaus, Law Enforcement Agencies, Insurance companies, and related firms with a strong interest in combating insurance fraud. The scope of the Association's activities has expanded largely to reach most countries of the world.

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