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TOM BETTCHER AT CONBRAVA OPENING CEREMONY

SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL – Thomas E. Bettcher, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI), praised the technical sessions of CONBRAVA and the concurrent FEBRAVA exhibition for bringing together the best and the brightest minds in the industry to advance the goal of improving the quality of life.

In his speech on September 30, 2003 at the opening ceremony for CONBRAVA, Brazil's refrigeration, ventilation and air conditioning congress, in São Paulo, Bettcher said "the panels and papers to be presented at CONBRAVA and the exhibitors at FEBRAVA, are proof that air conditioning and refrigeration technology is ready for the opportunities in front of us."

He said that no matter where people live, they want to benefit from technology advances that make life better, safer, more productive and more comfortable.

"In this hemisphere, whether you live in the south or north, the people of the Americas have made enormous strides forward," said Bettcher. "Your skills, your dedication, your innovation have made possible products that were beyond the wildest dreams of people living in the Americas of a century ago. And because of our unique relationship forged over many years, the people of the Americas will work together in a partnership that will assure that the dreams of today will some day be the every day products of tomorrow."

Bettcher also announced in his speech that ABRAVA, Brazil's refrigeration, air conditioning and ventilation association, has become the newest member of the International Council of Air Conditioning, Refrigeration Manufacturers' Association (ICARMA). ICARMA was established in 1991 as a membership organization open to national trade associations in major countries with manufacturers of air conditioning and refrigeration equipment that have a significant share of the international market.

"The Council serves as a forum for the discussion of issues affecting the global air conditioning and refrigeration industry," said Bettcher. "Its members include associations from the United States, Europe, China, Canada, Japan and now Brazil."

"In addition to the cooperative efforts of ICARMA," said Bettcher. "I would like to cite two areas where we can work together for our mutual benefit. First, we need to reach international agreements that guarantee manufacturers and product developers the opportunity to utilize refrigerants that are safe, improve performance, reduce operating costs and preserve the environment. We must unify in support of balanced refrigerant solutions for society, so that we can preserve and improve everyone's quality of life."

Bettcher also noted that the HVACR industry is well into the process of phasing out CFCs under the Montreal Protocol and that newly designed equipment using alternative refrigerants are accelerating this process. "These systems often consume less energy and reduce carbon dioxide production from electric generating plants. Our goal should be to work together to support international agreements that allow long-term use of diverse refrigerant solutions to meet the growing needs of people around the world."

“My second point is directly related to the role of HFCs in providing balanced solutions for society,” said Bettcher. “ARI believes we can achieve these solutions by following the principles of responsible HFC use that make us good citizens of the environment. The principles for responsible HFC use include minimizing emissions, recovery and re-use of HFCs, designing and installing HFC equipment to enhance energy efficiency and optimizing the amount of HFC needed for applications. Already, we are seeing the benefits of these concepts as products that rely on smaller refrigerant charges and use less energy enter the marketplace.”

“There is much cause for celebration about what the global industry has achieved, and a sense of excitement about where it will go,” said Bettcher. “ARI is especially thrilled because 2003 marks the 50th anniversary of its founding back in 1953. During the past 50 years, all of us working together have brought the comfort of air conditioning and the safety of properly refrigerated food and medicines to millions of people.”

The Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute is the trade association representing manufacturers of more than 90 percent of North American produced central air-conditioning and commercial refrigeration equipment.

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