



## NEWS RELEASE 3

### A Royal Welcome awaits all ISBC delegates

Success breeds success! This year's 35th ISBC International Small Business Congress in Belfast is set to be one of the best yet. Due to be welcomed by a member of the British Royal family, the number of delegates continues to rise, the standard of speakers is of the highest calibre and the mix of global delegates seems richer than ever.

ISBC offers a varied programme aimed at senior policy makers, support agency staff and practitioners in this field. Representing the Small Business Federations of countries in Asia, Europe and North America and governmental SME support organisations from around the world, ISBC is one of the most prestigious gatherings of persons interested in furthering knowledge, policy and practice for the sector.

Speakers are drawn from the SME government agencies of Japan, Korea, Taiwan and UK and from the EU, OECD, UN, World Bank and SME associations across five continents. Large delegations are expected from Japan, Korea, and China. The full Congress Programme is being mailed world-wide to Governments, Chambers and Associations concerned with SME policy and practice. For the registration and the latest programme details please click on the Congress Website [www.isbc2008.org](http://www.isbc2008.org).

Hanns-Eberhard Schleyer who leads ZDH in Germany will open the proceedings with Mme Le Bail, the EU's SME Ambassador, exploring what support is really needed for SME owners and their businesses. The virtues of the Small Business Act and its likely impact will be assessed.

One of the plenaries will explore the phenomenon of the fast growing business. While new business formation rates are relatively similar across countries, the proportion and performance of fast growth firms varies greatly. The conditions which beget such wide variations will be explored by Prof Zoltan Acs looking at the USA experience, with Profs Roy Thurik and Mark Hart looking at Europe and the UK. The Japanese/Asian experience will be elucidated by Prof Koichi Ito. Nor will the fast growing entrepreneur be forgotten in telling the story!

In another plenary, Profs Lois Stevenson and David Storey will battle it out on what policies best support entrepreneurship and SMEs. Denny Dennis who heads the research arm of the USA's National Federation of Independent Business will give a further perspective.

Other highlights include the latest research findings on job creation/destruction statistics from the UK's Industry Ministry. How to achieve business success using Asian formulae will be explained by the CEOs of SMEA in Taiwan, MATRADE in Malaysia and the SME Chamber of India, amongst many others.

You will hear how the miracle of the Irish economic transformation (the "Celtic Tiger") evolved from one of its major actors who headed Ireland's Industrial Development Authority for ten years. You will also hear what makes cities as well as countries enterprising with a study of Montreal. Several sessions will deal with the key issues facing SMEs in emerging, transition and developing economies. The future for female entrepreneurs will also feature strongly, led by Jackie Brierton of Prowess and Julie Weeks of Womenable Ltd. The youth entrepreneur session is attracting speakers from as far apart as Barbados, Brunei and Saudi Arabia,

The Congress will culminate in a vigorous debate on what makes a successful small business association with planned speakers including Todd McCracken, CEO of the USA's NASME, Hans-Werner Muller, until recently Secretary General of UEAPME, and Catherine Swift, CEO of the very successful Canadian Federation. John Wright of FSB will present a UK perspective.

#### **NOTE:**

*The Congress will run in parallel with the UK's prestigious Annual Conference of the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) offering the opportunity for a rich mix of practitioners, policymakers and researchers.*

*They will both take place in the Europa Hotel, Belfast, Northern Ireland from Tuesday 4th November until Friday 7th November 2008. ISBC 2008 is supported by the following leading public organisations:- Belfast City Council, Enterprise Ireland, Federation of Small Business UK, Inter-Trade Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland, Small Firms Association of Ireland and The Genesis Initiative plus several private sector sponsors. ISBE Postcard enclosed.*

*Issued on behalf of Prof Ken O'Neill, Chairman, by Brian L Dunsby, Organiser (E-mail: [organiser@isbc2008.org](mailto:organiser@isbc2008.org))*

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