EMHF

European & Mediterranean

Horseracing Federation

**PRESS RELEASE**

**(For immediate release)**

**RECORD TURNOUT AT EMHF GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

A record 18 racing nations were represented at this year’s General Assembly of the European and Mediterranean Horseracing Federation, held yesterday in St Moritz, where delegates were also able to experience the unique atmosphere of that famous resort’s ‘White Turf’ racing ,on its frozen lake.

Following an election, two candidates were welcomed onto the EMHF’s Executive Council. Dr Marian Surda and Mr Jakob Broger, Chief Executiv and President, respectively, of the racing authorities of Slovakia and of host country, Switzerland, took the places of representatives from Spain and Hungary.

Dr Surda has played a key role in the development of racing in Central Europe and was Co-founder, fifteen years ago, of the KMET, the organisation which brings together the racing enterprises in Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia.

Mr Broger is also a successful and fearless race rider, and had earlier taken part in the Credit Suisse-sponsored *Grand Prix von Sils* Skikjoring race - the spectacular code of racing where the ‘jockeys’ are pulled along on skis by their ‘mounts’.

The EMHF’s commitment to developing horseracing in its region’s ‘smaller’ racing nations remains central. Following successful seminars last year in Brussels (on EU Institutions), and at Weatherbys’ Headquarters (on racing and breeding administration), it was announced that two more would be held in 2015. The British Horseracing Authority will stage a two-day event in May on racecourse surface and facilities and a Trainer Masterclass is planned to be held in Bratislava in December, with a top international trainer as speaker.

THE EMHF is actively pursuing a policy of closer liaison with sister organisations in the racing sector. Mutual observer status at each other’s General Assemblies has now been established with both the Union Europeenne du Trot (European Trotting Federation) and the European Equestrian Federation, whose General Secretary, Mr Ali Küçük, made a presentation on his organisation’s work.

Mr Charles O’Neill, Chief Executive of Irish Thoroughbred Marketing, presented on the international strategic alliance, *Destination Europe*.

Mr Brian Kavanagh, EMHF Chairman said: “it’s impossible, when you witness the unique White Tuf races, not to reflect on both the extraordinary diversity of this great sport of ours, and the common thread that links and unites racing people, across our region and beyond. It has been wonderful to have had such a healthy turnout at our General Assembly, and enthusiasm for the work of the EMHF has been reflected in the keen competition to serve on our Executive Council.”

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**Notes for Editors**

The European and Mediterranean Horseracing Federation represents 27 Racing Authorities. It is the regional body of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities. See [www.euromedracing.eu](http://www.euromedracing.eu/).

The main objective of the EMHF is to develop relations among European and Mediterranean Horseracing Authorities, to coordinate promotion of horseracing in Europe and in Mediterranean countries, to defend its integrity and prestige throughout the world and to represent Europe and Mediterranean countries before IFHA.

Among its principal tasks are to:

* -  establish close and lasting relations among Horseracing Authorities.
* -  harmonize and apply common rules of racing in European and Mediterranean racing events
* -  observe and monitor the calendar of European and Mediterranean racing programmes, as well as conditions of entry
* -  exchange information on any change in the rules of one Member that could be of common interest for racing and breeding in general.
* -  draft common rules concerning racing and breeding
* -  publish European and Mediterranean statistics accessible to all members,
* -  support the developing racing countries,
* -  represent the interest of European horseracing before the European Union bodies,
* -  ensure exchange of information among EMHF Members on administration and tax regulations in particular with regard to betting on horse races.