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For immediate release

Magazines: The avant – garde of society

More than 850 publishing delegates gathered at the Carrousel du Louvre in Paris for the first day of the 34th FIPP World Magazine Congress on Tuesday (27th May). Under the banner Magazines: the avant garde of society, the event was celebrated as a home coming in France, where the Fédération Internationale de la Presse Périodique (FIPP) was founded more than 75 years ago.

Welcoming the largest attendance in the biennial events 68 year history, Gérald de Roquemaurel, FIPP chairman and chairman and ceo of Hachette Filipacchi recognised the dedication of those present and the industry's strength in adversity: "We are holding this Congress in spite of many global obstacles that stood in our way: War in the Middle East and the SARS pandemic.

"It was, however, vital that this event take place today. For the periodical press the time for renewed expansion has come. Magazines are a vehicle that readers continue to find attractive and the future is bright...Together, we are going to lay down the prerequisites for renewed expansion of magazines."

The strong numbers were despite China's presence being decimated by the current SARS scare. Said de Roquemaurel: "let me take this opportunity to salute the courage of Minister Zongyuan Shi, head of the 118 people strong Chinese delegation who chose to stay at home to help combat this disease. On your behalf I wish to express our support to the Chinese delegation and tell them how important we view their statement on the globalisation of magazines."

The head of the international publishing giant then praised the magazine community for successfully maintaining its unique and unrivalled position in the media mix and in society as a whole: "Acting as a mirror for society and reflecting the most complex developments, magazines are always in the vanguard...This is what magazines do best: from famous news or picture titles, developed in order to help readers understand the era they live in, to women's magazines promoting the liberation of women and their victories, or special interest magazines heralding technological revolutions. Such magazines foster a commitment on the part of their readership. They are one step ahead of society and a harbinger of major social trends."

De Roquemaurel concluded his opening address with a taste of what was to follow over the next two days: "In the course of this Congress, well-informed and well travelled speakers will address the major concerns of our industry: international editors in chief who are familiar with the recipes for success, the European Commission, world-renowned media strategies and the biggest names in the advertising community and many others are scheduled to speak. We have top billing."

A full report from the 34th FIPP World Magazine congress, fair and exhibition will be featured in next weeks *magworld update*.

Presentations from the event can be found online at www.fipp.com .

ENDS

- Please visit the official website at: www.fipp2003.com
- For further information about exhibition, sponsorship and advertising opportunities please contact Christine Scott at FIPP: Christine@fipp.com or Tel: +44 (20) 7404 4169
- For registration, tours and accommodation information please contact Stéphanie Le Lay at Publicis Dialog: Info@fipp2003.org or Tel: +33 1 55 19 42 79
- For programme information please contact Helen Bland at FIPP: Helen@fipp.com or Tel: +44 (20) 7404 4169
- *Congress logo (.tif format) available by email.*

NOTES FOR EDITORS

FIPP

The International Federation of the Periodical Press (FIPP), founded in 1925, works for the benefit of magazine and business-to-business publishers around the world. FIPP's mission is to promote nationally and internationally, the common editorial, cultural and economic interests of magazine publishers, both in print and electronic media. FIPP focuses its activities on freedom of the press, intellectual property, information provision, freedom to advertise, freedom of distribution and environmental protection.

Today, the membership of FIPP consists of more than 42 national magazine associations and 130 publishing and associate companies in direct membership. FIPP serves a global market with a total annual advertising expenditure revenue in the region of US\$50 billion and approximately 100,000 titles based on figures from *FIPP/Zenith World Magazine Trends 2002/2003*.

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