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**June 28, 2013**

## **Great Success of American Hardwood Export Council 18<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asia & Greater China Convention**

Themed "American Hardwood: Consistent Quality and Sustainable Supply", the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) 18<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asia (SEA) & Greater China (GRCH) Convention was successfully held in Shangri-La Hotel, Harbin, Heilongjiang, China on June 20, 2013. This year over 350 registered delegates including furniture manufacturers, timber traders, designers, associations' representatives, AHEC members (i.e. American Hardwood Suppliers) and media, etc. attended the event to exchange and discuss ideas on the applications of sustainable American Hardwoods.

Harbin has been thriving in June with two events held continuously one after another. Held also in Harbin, Heilongjiang, this year Convention started immediately after the 24<sup>th</sup> China Harbin International Economic and Trade Fair. Known as the "Paris of the Orient", Harbin is neighboring other Northeastern China provinces such as Jilin and Liaoning provinces and Northeastern cities such as Sui Fen He, Changchun, Shenyang and Dalian. It is located at the northeastern frontier of China and Russia which makes Harbin an important strategic city for the Heilongjiang province. Heilongjiang is known for China's timber trade hub with millions cubic meter of timber shipment to China every year.

As a trading and business platform, AHEC SEA & GRCH Convention is an important annual event for timber industry to meet old friends and network with new contacts. This year Convention was co-organized with China Timber & Wood Products Distribution Association (CTWPDA), Harbin City Furniture Association (HRBFA) and National Hardwood Council of STTA (NHC) and the three associations have totally brought in more than 200 own members to join the event.

Welcome Speeches by Mr. Philip Jarrell, Director of Agriculture Trade Office Shenyang, American Consulate General, Mr. Wang Tieqiang, Harbin Municipal



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Committee and Head of the United Front Work Department, Mr. Dean Alanko, AHEC Chairman and Mr. John Chan, Regional Director of AHEC SEA & GRCH kicked off the Convention, followed by an introduction of Harbin Economy Development by the Director of Industry and Information Technology Committee of Harbin Mr. Zhi Da Yong. With an overview of Harbin, it allowed delegates, first-time overseas visitors in particular, to deepen their understandings of the Harbin City.

Mr. Rupert Oliver, Director of Forest Industries Intelligence Limited, Mr. Michael Snow, Executive Director, AHEC, Mr. Theodore Rossi, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of The Rossi Group, LLC, Mr. Dana Spessert, Chief Inspector of National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA), Mr. Francis Satoru Amagasu, Owner of Satoru Amagasu, LLC, Mr. Chen Bao Guang, Vice Chairman of China National Furniture Association (CNFA) and Mr. James Xu, President of NHC were invited as Convention keynote speakers to address the topics of Global Environmental Policies, Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of American Hardwood, Kiln-Dried Lumber Certificate and Lumber Grading of American Hardwood, Furniture Design of American Hardwood, China Furniture Market and the Distribution of American Hardwoods in China.

Breakout Sessions were also taken place during the Convention to give participants the latest information on the furniture markets of China, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

There was a great support from local government on the first-time AHEC event in Harbin. Ms Zhang Ping, President of HRBFA, one of the supporting organizers of the Convention, expected AHEC can once again go to Harbin to promote more American Hardwood products in the future.



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### Convention Snapshots



Snapshot at the AHEC 18th SEA & GRCH Convention



Mr. Philip Jarrell, Director, Agriculture Trade Office Shenyang, American Consulate General



Mr. Michael Snow, Executive Director, American Hardwood Export Council presented certificate to the representative of Harbin Government Mr. Wang Tieqiang, Harbin Municipal Committee and Head of the United Front Work Department



Mr. Rupert Oliver, Director, Forest Industries Intelligence Limited gave an overview of environmental policies around the globe



Mr. Dana Spessert, Chief Inspector, National Hardwood Lumber Association introduced US Hardwood Lumber Grading



Report by Ms. Zhang Ping, President, Harbin City Furniture Association on the current development and future prospect of Harbin Furniture Industry



Networking Time



Snapshot at the Breakout Session