



Press Release

BAHRAIN WORLD TRADE CENTER LIGHTS UP BLUE ON WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Iconic towers joins world famous global landmarks to bring the world's attention to Autism

Manama, Bahrain. 4 April 2010: The Bahrain World Trade Center (BWTC), Bahrain's iconic landmark became a "Blue Monument" as it lit up in blue and joined the global Autism awareness campaign- 'Light *It Up Blue*', to raise awareness and develop world knowledge of Autism (complex brain disorder), on Thursday, 1st April, the first night of Autism Awareness Month and the eve of World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD).

The BWTC united with other famous iconic buildings around the world to commemorate the third World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) on Friday, 2 April 2010. The international initiative supported by the United Nations was organised by Autism Speaks, the world's largest autism advocacy organisation, to heighten awareness about a disorder which now affects more than 67 million people worldwide.

Mr. Bob Addison, Country Manager of DTZ (BWTC's Managing and Leasing Agents) commented: "BWTC wanted to represent the Kingdom of Bahrain in the global 'Light It Up Blue' campaign in order to raise awareness of Autism in our local society. Our participation reaffirms our commitment to protecting the health of children in our country and throughout the world. We join many nations around the globe in marking this day and using it to raise important health and social issues related to autism and thereby inspire compassion, hope and inclusion for those affected.

“As a landmark development for the Kingdom - and for the world in sustainable architecture - we hope that BWTC's participation alongside such icons as the New York Empire State Building will not only promote awareness of Autism, but also of Bahrain on the international stage.”

Other participating buildings included : The Empire State Building, the New York Stock Exchange and Radio City Music Hall in New York; the new Meadowlands football stadium in New Jersey; Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower) in Chicago; the Benjamin Franklin Bridge in Philadelphia; Toronto's iconic CN Tower; Kingdom Tower in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and the Bell Tower in Perth, Australia. National retailers, including Toys“R”Us Times Square GeoffreyTron screen that overlooks Broadway, Lord & Taylor, Saks Fifth Avenue, the NBA Store and Tommy Hilfiger and many other landmark buildings lit up in blue and offered autism information in some or all of their stores.

Government offices, monuments and millions of individuals and families around the globe also lit up in blue to shine a bright light on the growing autism health crisis and the struggles of millions of families.

World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) was established by a resolution passed unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, making autism one of only three health issues to be recognized by the UN with its own day.

This year WAAD had organised a series of high profile awareness events and initiatives to increase and develop world knowledge of the autism epidemic and impart information regarding the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention. The Bahrain Society for Children with Behavioural and Communications Difficulties celebrated WAAD 2010 with a variety of programmes.

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About Bahrain World Trade Center

Situated on the Manama waterfront and in the heart of the region's leading financial and business hub, the Bahrain World Trade Center (BWTC) project comprises the two 50-storey sail shaped twin office towers, the five-star Sheraton Hotel as well as MODA Mall, Bahrain's only ultra high-end shopping destination, featuring some 160 luxury retail outlets as well as a host of modern cafes and exciting fine dining eateries.

The BWTC provides leading regional and international organizations with a world-class business address. The buildings are highly advanced in design and operation and are the Kingdom's first intelligent offices, employing the latest SMART systems capable of delivering unsurpassed security and maximum competitive advantages and efficiency in office management. In addition, they are the first of their kind in the world, using wind energy to provide 11 – 15% of the electricity needs of the office towers.

Other benefits enjoyed by local and international businesses occupying space at the development is membership to the World Trade Centers Association (WTCA). Locating at the BWTC offers an exceptional opportunity for connectivity with the global business community. With more than 300 centers in 100 countries, WTCA has a membership of approximately 750,000 commercial enterprises worldwide.

About World Autism Awareness Day

On December 18, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 62/139, tabled by the State of Qatar, declaring April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day in perpetuity. This UN resolution established WAAD as one of only three official disease-specific United Nations Days, with the goal of bringing the world's attention to autism, a pervasive disorder that affects tens of millions.

World Autism Awareness Day shines a bright light on autism as a growing global health concern. WAAD activities help to increase and develop world knowledge of the autism crisis and impart information regarding the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention. Additionally, WAAD celebrates the unique talents and skills of people with autism, and features community events around the world where individuals with autism and their families are warmly welcomed and embraced.

About Autism

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that inhibits a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships, and is often accompanied by behavioral challenges. Autism spectrum disorders are diagnosed in one in 110 children in the United States, affecting four times as many boys as girls. The prevalence of autism increased 57 percent from 2002 to 2006. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have called autism a national public health crisis whose cause and cure remain unknown.

About Autism Speaks

Autism Speaks is North America's largest autism science and advocacy organization. Since its inception only five short years ago, Autism Speaks has made enormous strides, committing over \$142.5 million to research and developing innovative new resources for families through 2014. The organization is dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. In addition to funding research, Autism Speaks also supports the Autism Treatment Network, Autism Genetic Resource Exchange and several other scientific and clinical programs. Notable awareness initiatives include the establishment of the annual United Nations-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day on April 2 and an award-winning "Learn the Signs" campaign with the Ad Council which has received over \$210 million in donated media. Autism Speaks' family resources include the Autism Video Glossary, a 100 Day Kit for newly-diagnosed families, a School Community Tool Kit, a community grant programme and much more. Autism Speaks has played a critical role in securing federal legislation to advance the government's response to autism, and has successfully advocated for insurance reform to cover behavioral treatments. Each year *Walk Now for Autism Speaks* events are held in more than 80 cities across North America. To learn more about Autism Speaks, please visit www.autismspeaks.org.

For further information on BWTC please contact:

Neena Punnen

Hill and Knowlton

Email: (neena.punnen@hillandknowlton.com)

Tel: +97317539514