

# MICE INDUSTRY WILL PROSPER AGAIN IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Although scenes of political unrest and a lack of security have been commonplace in recent times in Middle Eastern countries, delegates of the relevant parties have recently spoken with optimism about the future of MICE industry in the region.

The Middle East being in the news for turmoil is nothing new to the front pages of international newspapers. Such events have led to fears in the tourism industry that the Middle East region would suffer due to such negative publicity. However, the results of a recent GIBTM (Gulf Incentive Business Travel and Meeting Exhibitions) meeting show that optimism is on a high level.

Of the high number of delegates asked, **41% only claimed that they expect drops in the number of MICE visitors in 2011**. Considering the fact that the Egyptian crisis is expected to take over four months to pass away and that hotels in Hurghada, Sharm el Sheikh and Luxur would probably have to drop their rates, such low percentage is quite surprising. 19% expected no change and **53% even expected some increase in tourism this year**. GIBTM is the only organization dedicated to MICE in the Middle East and has been proven to be a great platform for sharing knowledge and ideas amongst those who need them.

Egypt is, of course, not the only Middle Eastern nation to have been in the news concerning political unrest and insecurity. It is important to help change the image of the region from one of religious intolerance and violence to one of wealth, history and prosperity.

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