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Hydrogen Conference Starts Big With Schwarzenegger Welcome

(Long Beach, CA)—Yesterday, the National Hydrogen Association opened its 17th Annual Hydrogen Conference and Hydrogen Expo US in Long Beach, California, highlighted by personal greetings from the state's chief executive, the President of French Polynesia, and several high-ranking Californian environmental officials. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger addressed over 1,000 delegates by video satellite feed from the State Capitol, declaring his administration's commitment to protect California's environment and encourage the use of clean energy technologies like those using hydrogen.

"California is investing millions of dollars to line our freeways with hydrogen fueling stations so that low emission cars can travel up and down our wonderful state," said Gov. Schwarzenegger. "With more and more businesses proving that hydrogen power is practical, clean and here to stay, we are well on our way to a hydrogen future. California is committed to clean air and the health and economic benefits that go along with it."

Following the Governor's address, delegates watched the live ribbon-cutting ceremony for California's latest hydrogen fueling station in Oakland, about 400 miles to the north. The station, built by Chevron, will support AC Transit's fuel cell buses, as well as Hyundai hydrogen cars.

At the opening session, the assembly also heard from the Governor's special assistant Terry Tamminen; former Secretary for Environmental Protection Alan Lloyd; and South Coast Air Quality Management District board member Cynthia Verdugo-Peralta. President Oscar Temaru of the Tahitian Islands also spoke about the need for building a hydrogen economy in his country and presented a special gift to Mr. Tamminen who accepted the antique Polynesian war weapon on behalf of Gov. Schwarzenegger. Earlier in his address, Schwarzenegger said he is an "environmental warrior."

The country's largest hydrogen conference features nearly a week of hydrogen-related speakers and events, including an exposition with over 90 exhibitors. Delegates in attendance represent 24 nations, including Germany, South Africa, China, India and Brazil and 44 of the 50 U.S. States. Today's plenary session on "International Progress" featured five high-ranking officials from Iceland, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Germany and the European Commission.

"Today's speakers demonstrated how global the hydrogen movement is today," said Jeff Serfass, President of the National Hydrogen Association. During the session, China announced plans to have 20,000 hydrogen fuel cell buses in operation by 2010.

The NHA Conference also features 17 hydrogen-powered vehicles which are available today to the public for test drives to attendees as well as dozens of products on display in the Expo Hall.

About the National Hydrogen Association: The National Hydrogen Association (NHA) is the Nation's premier hydrogen trade organization led by over 100 companies dedicated to supporting the transition to hydrogen. Efforts are focused on education and outreach, policy, safety and codes and standards. Since 1989, the NHA has served as a catalyst for information exchange and cooperative projects and continues to provide the setting for mutual support among industry, research and government organizations. www.HydrogenAssociation.org.

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