



Successful start into 2017 with General Assembly and International Casino Conference

London, 7 February 2017 – ECA members gathered in London for the first General Assembly of 2017 that was held at *ICE - Totally Gaming*, the premier exhibition for the industry in Europe. A key discussion at the General Assembly was the strategic direction of the ECA in the years ahead, which will focus on closely working with EU policy-makers on the crucial topics for the industry. Specifically, the ECA will undertake the following activities in 2017:

- Review of the ECA Responsible Gaming Framework
- Inform and contribute to discussions on anti-money laundering policies at EU and national level
- Put pressure on policy-makers to stronger combat illegal and unlicensed gambling offers
- Introduce a new partnership programme to replace Associate Memberships
- Assist members through research, reports and information from the EU institutions

During the General Assembly and in a high-level seminar at ICE, ECA board member Janny Wierda launched the ECA gender diversity initiative that will also be among the key activities in 2017. Through this, the ECA will encourage increased gender diversity at all levels of management in the industry.

International Casino Conference

Monday, the 6th February saw the International Casino Conference (ICC) take place at the Hippodrome Casino in London. The event - jointly organised by the ECA and partner Clarion Events - once again attracted a large number of high-level speakers and participants.

ECA chair, Per Jaldung opened the conference with a look back at a successful 2016, which with San Marino and Montenegro as newest members saw the association grow to now 26 member countries. As Jaldung highlighted, the industry is an important contributor to economies and societies across Europe directly employing approximately 70,000 employees and supporting many more jobs in small and medium-sized companies in local economies. The land-based casino industry also contributes through generating substantial tax revenues and funding for good causes such as the arts, sports, culture and many more.

Furthermore on the agenda of the ICC were the future positioning of casinos in the wider entertainment industry, as well as regulatory discussions about the impact of the unlicensed industry, regulatory sustainability and anti-money laundering policies. Geoff Freeman, President and CEO of the American Gaming Association (AGA) highlighted the need for close cooperation in the industry at international level on these and other topics. The ECA and AGA have been closely working together on these issues, which are important for the industry at global, since forming a cooperation at the ICC in 2016.

This was also echoed by Connie Jones from the Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers (AGEM), who presented the industry's efforts towards social responsibility and responsible gambling.