

Press Release

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Mitigation of Risk key to business success during times of economic and health woe

It is not productive during such challenging times for business to limit opportunity and one company is in town for OTC to help exhibitors and delegates understand the importance of risk mitigation.

International Security and Risk Mitigation Company, AKE has deployed a senior delegation to Houston to raise awareness of these challenges and how to mitigate against them – and crucially, how these measures need not necessarily be a cost centre, but can instead promote operational success.

From comments made by panellists and delegates alike during OTC's opening day, it is clear that despite potential pandemics, economic concerns and security issues in various operational areas, the industry remains optimistic and has successfully weathered downturns in the past. Indeed, in reality, it is not an option for energy companies to cease working in potentially lucrative areas of operation, for example, Nigeria.

On 4 May at OTC, the Nigerian presidential advisor on petroleum matters offered assurances to foreign investors in the country's oil and gas sector stating that the government is doing its best to tackle the security threats to operations in the Niger Delta. Presidential Advisor Dr. Emmanuel Egbogah also commented that he did not believe that OTC was the correct arena for the discussion of security in the Niger Delta. AKE disagrees highlighting the fact that delegates and exhibitors hail from the four corners of the world and operate in some of the worlds' most challenging working environments, one of which is the Niger Delta.

Dr. Egbogah's comments are unlikely to alleviate fears as they come just days after the latest victim of kidnap in Nigeria released details of his ordeal in captivity, and Shell's resumption of production following the closure of the Trans-Niger crude oil pipeline due to a fire, the suspected result of sabotage. Furthermore, threats by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta to attack all naval formations on the Atlantic fringe of Bayelsa following an incident close to the Funiwa oil flow, only supports AKE's position.

Tim Crockett, Executive Director of AKE LLC currently in Houston for OTC commented that:

The spectre of a potential swine flu pandemic demonstrates that threats to the security of companies' operations and their most valuable asset, their personnel, do not always follow patterns of traditional security threats, for example, terrorism, piracy, bombs, guns and kidnapping.

These threats vary greatly in scope and potential outcome, to recent incidents in Nigeria but, the thorough preparation of personnel is the responsibility of companies, as is comprehensive crisis management planning, to deal with a crisis, should it impact upon its operations and/or personnel and this planning process should incorporate all aspects of risk, whether medical, political or security.

International travel and operating in far flung geographic locations, many with security, political and health risks are a necessary pre-requisite of the global energy industry; however, there are ways and means to mitigate these risks, allowing companies to operate where their competitors may fear to tread and to benefit economically from the resource wealth of these regions of the world.

Ends

AKE representatives at OTC can be contacted for comment on the following email and cell numbers:

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Notes to editors

www.akegroup.com

Founded in 1991 by Andrew Kain, AKE Ltd provides security and risk management to international businesses, NGOs and the Media.

AKE is a leading international security risk mitigation company providing a variety of fully integrated services. AKE distinguishes itself from other security services companies by taking a proactive, intelligence-led approach to assessing, monitoring and training for and protecting against risk.