Launch of the Unmanned Systems Rodeo:

1st of its kind competition for students in the Middle East

Abu Dhabi, 21-2-2011

The first Unmanned Systems Rodeo (USR) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will take place at the Higher Colleges of Technologies in Abu Dhabi on May 4 and 5, 2011. This was announced today at the International Defense Exhibition (IDEX), by the organizers of the event The Institute for Near East & Gulf Military Analysis – INEGMA, during a joint press conference with the Higher Colleges of Technology – HCT, Northrop Grumman Corporation – NGC, and Abu Dhabi Autonomous Systems Investment – ADASI. The press conference was held under the auspices of H.E. Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Higher Education and Science who will be the Patron of the event. The USR will feature a competition for UAE tertiary students to design, build, test and pilot remote controlled unmanned aircraft. Competing teams will be judged for their presentation, speed, performance and endurance of their respective unmanned aircrafts.

USR, the first event of its type in the region encourages students to apply their mathematical and scientific knowledge to a real world engineering project. Students will learn the engineering process of designing, building and testing their unmanned aircrafts and will also develop teamwork and presentation skills.

Major General (Ret.) Khaled Abdullah Al Bu-Ainnain, President of INEGMA, the organizers of the event said: "It is a great opportunity for INEGMA to organize the Unmanned Systems Rodeo which is the first of its kind in the Middle East. It comes to fulfill an important element of the vision of the UAE leadership in transferring knowledge and technology to the new generations." He added: "This event aims at enhancing the research and development skills of our young people. The Unmanned Systems Rodeo is a yearly event, and our goal is to transform it into a regional then international event."

Engineers from HCT, NGC & ADASI will be assisting the participating students throughout the 3 months of preparations. NGC engineers will be travelling from the United States to give courses on Airplane Parts & Basic Aerodynamics.

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Dr. Tayeb Kamali, HCT Vice Chancellor said the Higher Colleges of Technology were very pleased to be working closely in partnership with event organizer INEGMA, Northrop Grumman, as the event sponsor and ADASI, to host the UAV Rodeo. "Unmanned Aerial Vehicle events are known around the world and this will be the first such event involving tertiary education students in the UAE, which is a great honor for us," Dr. Kamali said. "The HCT has a long tradition of providing the best possible educational and technology experiences for its students and this event will be an opportunity for HCT engineering and aeronautical students to learn new skills while being able to put into practice the array of learning tools they have obtained during their studies. We thank Northrop Grumman for providing such wonderful prizes as incentives for entering the best examples of student work in the area of unmanned aerial vehicles, as well as INEGMA and ADASI who have helped allow this event become a reality."

The first place team will receive an all expenses paid to the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International – AUVSI Convention for North America in Washington, D.C., USA from 16-19 August 2011. The students will have the opportunity to present their concept design to an audience at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C., USA. The second place team will receive an award of educational value offered by ADASI.

Pam Frazier, Vice President of Northrop Grumman International, the presenting sponsor said: "Across the world, Northrop Grumman continues to focus on educational programs and partnerships, especially in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related (STEM) areas." She noted: "Through our partnership with the UAE and Higher Colleges of Technology we believe that this Unmanned Rodeo Competition is one of many steps Northrop Grumman and the UAE can take together to ensure His Highness General Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 is achieved."

Dr Ali Saleh Al Yafei, CEO of ADASI, the associate sponsor said: "ADASI's Vision includes the facet of enhancing the local capabilities of industry and to involve our young engineers in exciting technologies. One learns best by doing, and we are particularly appreciative of this opportunity provided to the participants by HCT and NGC., We are looking forward to seeing the results of this competition spilling into our area of key endeavour, namely unmanned autonomous systems. such systems are anticipated to serve humanity in many roles: in Air, on Ground and in the Sea".

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