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New Chalhoub Group white paper explores industry approach to sustainability of luxury goods in Middle East

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Chalhoub Group, a leading partner for luxury across the Middle East, has launched the Group's third white paper, 'Luxury in the Gulf: A Sustainable Future?' at the Responsible Business Summit.

Detailed knowledge of the Middle East and its people is at the forefront of Chalhoub Group's business practices. Celebrating 60 years in the industry this year, the Group is said to be the go-to partner for major international brands wanting to enter the Middle Eastern market, with extensive experience in building brands in the region across the beauty, fashion, and gift sectors.

The Group's research in the Middle East has found:

- 65% of global luxury consumers surveyed claim that sustainability is not a part of their decision-making agenda when it comes to luxury purchases
- Instead, 83% of respondents expect the luxury companies they buy from to proactively engage in sustainable practices

Chalhoub Group's third white paper sets out to explore the Gulf region beyond the luxury sector, drawing on lessons learnt from the inherent link between basic luxury principles and promoting sustainability in the Middle East. Ensuring the highest quality, the most premium materials and the finest craftsmanship are intrinsic to the luxury sector, but are fast becoming a necessary business priority across all sectors in ensuring sustainable growth and best practice in the region.

The region faces several significant challenges with the following:

- One of the world's largest energy suppliers and the world's largest consumer of energy
- One of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world
- Countries of the region ranked amongst the top ten nations for foreign aid by volume in the world

The Group's white paper sets out a number of sustainable solutions that have been effectively developed and rolled out across the region including:

- The construction of two of the world's largest eco-cities, including the low-carbon, zero waste Masdar City in Abu Dhabi and Desert Rose in Dubai; demonstrating the region-wide commitment to environmentally-friendly living
- The Emirati and Saudi graduate programme put in place by Chalhoub Group to attract and retain local national talents
- The Khalifa Fund – a knowledge-sharing, mentoring and experiential learning initiative, designed in partnership with Chalhoub Group, to empower aspiring entrepreneurs in the UAE and develop a culture of entrepreneurship

The central theme of this white paper is set against an interesting backdrop of inherent social values which have shaped the culture of the modern Gulf region. These deep-rooted values of community solidarity and trust, combined with the family business model, have proved a culturally appropriate vehicle for the region's sustainability.

Patrick Chalhoub, co-CEO Chalhoub Group, said: "Luxury is adapting to our fast evolving world, and while ancient traditions have shaped Middle Eastern society for centuries, luxury in the Gulf shows a promising future as it echoes these deeply rooted traditions and culture.

With its family-centric structure and its respect for tradition, the Gulf society supports the drive and mind-set for sustainability. We believe that the family business model, inherent to the region's economic and social fabric, and human resources both have an important role to play in increasing awareness about sustainability and driving engagement in sustainable initiatives."