



Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.



THE RLJ COMPANIES ANNOUNCES THE FORMATION OF A STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. AND HAITIAN PARTNERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF HAITI

Announcement Came After Meeting with President Preval Who Conveyed His Support of the Group's Effort to Stimulate Construction of Housing and Critical Infrastructure throughout Country

BETHESDA, MD (JUNE 23, 2010)// In an effort to spur economic revitalization in Haiti, Bob Johnson, founder and chairman of The RLJ Companies (RLJ), today announced a strategic relationship with Global Building Solutions, LLC, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd. (RCL) and Haiti-based WIN Group, to build two structured insulated panel (SIP) manufacturing facilities that will provide construction materials for building housing and critical infrastructure in and around Port-Au-Prince, Cap Hatien, as well as throughout other key business centers in Haiti.



Haitian President Rene Preval; Bob Johnson, founder and chairman of The RLJ Companies; Youri Mevs, managing partner, Haiti-based WIN Group and president of the Haitian Economic Development Foundation. (Port Au Prince/Photo Credit: Randy Valdes)

The announcement came during a visit by Johnson to Port-Au-Prince, where he met with Haitian President Rene Preval, Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive, and other key governmental and community leaders. They stated that Johnson's proposal should be introduced to the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission as a priority project for approval and funding.

The facilities would be developed through Johnson's newly formed entity, Caribbean Opportunity Holdings, a company jointly owned by RLJ and Global Building Solutions (GBS), a South Carolina-based international SIP manufacturer and design/build organization.

SIP technology is stronger than traditionally built homes and is more resistant to earthquakes, wind and other natural elements. In a climate such as Haiti's, it offers added strength and durability at a competitive value. The product is also green technology, which creates structures that are energy-efficient and comfortable.

Using GBS's proven SIP technology, RLJ and GBS recently teamed to develop the RLJ Kendeja Resort and Villas in Monrovia, Liberia, which, from architectural plans to grand opening, was completed in under 12 months. The team looks to engage the same technology and processes, as well as local business entities to further Haiti's infrastructure needs, a crucial element of this endeavor. For example, in Liberia, where GBS directly employed 900 local workers, as well as facilitated the formation of 37 locally owned subcontractors who were crucial to the successful development of the hotel project.

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The strategic relationship includes Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd., the largest global cruise brand and the second largest investor in Haiti, with cruise lines that port in Labadee, Haiti, and Haiti-based WIN Group, one of the Caribbean's largest conglomerates, with stakes in diverse industries such as warehousing, storage and port operations.

“While the situation in Haiti is extremely challenging, our team was very encouraged by President Preval’s leadership, his commitment to political stability, openness towards the international business community, and desire for further investment,” said Johnson. “We had a very constructive visit, and I’ve no doubt that bringing together international and local businesses with a broad range of expertise will allow this project to help meet the country’s crucial housing and infrastructure needs.”

“We are honored to work with The RLJ Companies, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd. and WIN Group to provide such an important element of Haiti’s reconstruction,” says Michael Murphy, principal with GBS. “We also look forward to training area residents, helping them develop a new trade, and of course, a source of employment and generating revenue.”

“Royal Caribbean has been one of Haiti’s largest foreign investors and employers for almost 30 years. During this time, we have developed both a strong partnership with Haiti, as well as nurtured a strong presence,” said Richard Fain, chairman and CEO of RCL. “Since the devastating earthquake earlier this year, we have been assisting Haiti in its recovery by providing basic life necessities: medical supplies, water, food and education. Royal Caribbean is currently building a model school in Labadee. What better way to help rebuild a country than by contributing to a strong education for its children? We will be acquiring materials from GBS and are using local Haitian labor to build the school. We are pleased to join with The RLJ Companies, GBS, and the WIN Group, in furthering our commitment in Haiti,” Fain said.

“We need support from the U.S. private sector to further President Clinton’s call to help expand our economy,” says Youri Mevs, managing partner of the WIN Group, and president of the Haitian Economic Development Foundation. “The RLJ Companies has global expertise in a multitude of sectors and knows what it takes to create sustainable business and resources. We are confident that they can be a major asset in rebuilding our nation.”

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About The RLJ Companies:

The RLJ Companies, founded by Robert L. Johnson, is an innovative business network that provides strategic investments in a diverse portfolio of companies. The RLJ Companies seeks to target undiscovered or underserved markets then exercise solid management to achieve results. Within The RLJ Companies portfolio, Johnson owns or holds majority interests in businesses operating in banking, private equity, hospitality, automobile dealerships, entertainment, and video lottery terminal (VLT) gaming. The RLJ Companies is headquartered in Bethesda, MD, with affiliate operations in Charlotte, NC; Orlando, FL; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; San Juan, PR; and Monrovia, Liberia. Prior to founding The RLJ Companies, Johnson was founder and chairman of Black Entertainment Television (BET). For more information visit www.rljcompanies.com.

About Global Building Solutions:

Global Building Solutions, LLC is a project-based company which seeks out unique opportunities globally in order to provide comprehensive ground up project management. GBS owns and operates manufacturing facilities in Charleston, South Carolina and in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia which produce advanced building materials capable of being exported worldwide. GBS continually strives to innovate its products and manufacturing processes to create exportable, value-added solutions for its customers and their projects. GBS has extensive experience in the area of SIP manufacturing, construction, construction management, and finance and project management. GBS's world headquarters are located in Charleston, South Carolina. For additional information visit: www.globalbuilding.net.

About Royal Caribbean Cruises LTD

Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. is a global cruise vacation company that operates Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Pullmantur, Azamara Club Cruises and CDF Croisieres de France. The company has a combined total of 39 ships in service and three under construction. It also offers unique land-tour vacations in Alaska, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, Canada, Dubai, Europe and South America. Additional information can be found on www.royalcaribbean.com, www.celebritycruises.com, www.pullmantur.es, www.azamarclubcruise.com, www.cdfcroisieresdefrance.com or www.rclinvestor.com

About WIN Group:

The Haiti-based, Mevs family-held WIN Group is one of the Caribbean's largest conglomerates with stakes in diverse industries such as warehousing and storage, and port operations. WIN's holdings include SHODECOSA, the largest privately-owned industrial and commercial park in Haiti, Varreux Terminal, the largest privately-owned general cargo shipping terminal, and WINECO, the largest liquid bulk storage facility, among other enterprises. The fourth generation family has always had a significant impact on the country through its social service-based endeavors, and actively supports numerous organizations providing both immediate relief, and long-term infrastructure development. For additional information, visit www.wingrouponline.com.

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