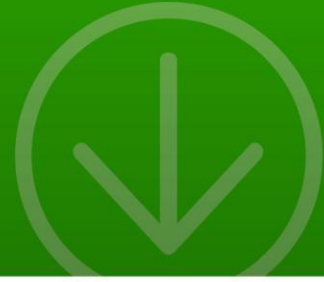


ARAB-EU

Business Facilitation Network



The Forum des Chefs d'Entreprises and Social Dialogue



Réda HAMIANI
President of the Forum des Chefs d'Entreprises (FCE)

In Algeria, the Economic and Social dialogue and the consultation between the public authorities, the workers' unions and the employers' associations, representing the private and public sectors, are organized within a « Tripartite State-Unions-Employers Associations » framework, which reinforces the springs of the economic and social dialogue by structuring and organizing it.

Until 2005/2006, dialogue initiatives undertaken within this framework were mainly directed towards short-term concerns (often to find answers in order to appease the social sphere in a difficult national economic climate and negotiate the minimum wage increase levels). Since then, the favorable conditions that Algeria experienced opened a new perspective allowing ambitious reforms to be undertaken for a revival of the national economic development in a long term view, a significant increase in the population income level, and structural solutions to social issues.

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This implied the implementation of a genuine economic policy of medium and long term views, based on clear choices and supported by the whole Algerian society, government, and economic and social partners, acting together in order to define objectives to achieve and specify the commitments through which each party would be involved.

It is, thus, in this context and logic of consultation and consensus findings that the relationships had to evolve, adopting a new approach that aims at laying the foundations for a genuine growth pact, instead of only dealing with the social questions and giving fluctuating responses to particular problems. This new approach would be the only way that would really lead to a harmonious social development.

The National Economic and Social Pact of 2006

This framework led, for the first time, to the development and adoption, in 2006, by the Algerian government, employers associations and workers unions, a "National Economic and Social Pact", a platform that defined each partner's expectations and engagements in order to contribute efficiently and effectively to the country's economic growth.

On February 23rd, 2014 the 16th Tripartite was held and the renewed National Economic and Social Pact was signed by the social partners and the Algerian Government in 2006. For the renewal of this agreement, the Forum des Chefs d'Entreprises contributed by submitting some propositions, summarized below:

Getting out of the cycle of dependence on hydrocarbons

For the FCE, the purpose of the social dialogue is to find a consensus to get the necessary reforms for a sustainable national economic development, the implementation of structural solutions in order to ensure the stability of the national economy, sustain its growth, get out of the spiral of dependence to hydrocarbon, reduce unemployment by the massive creation of sustainable jobs, as well as ensuring a significant improvement in the population living standards.

Today's priority in the Algerian national context is to open a debate on the economic growth. In other words, are the available resources properly used? Is the growth level currently targeted by the authorities sufficient to meet employment needs? What are the necessary conditions to ensure higher more sustainable growth, and creating more job opportunities?

The FCE supports the idea that it is through the company, which represents an important location to create wealth and jobs that these objectives can be achieved. This is why it permanently thinks that the company must be in the center of all national economic and social development policies and, therefore, calls the government to support its emergence and development as the main engine for a stronger and more sustainable growth.



The Market Economy: Four fundamental principles to be observed

The doctrinal debate regarding the economic option to adopt was finally settled and the choice between the market economy and other economic models does not exist anymore, especially for models adopted in the early decades of independence. The market economy involves universal rules and requires adherence to four basic principles:

1. Guarantee the right of property, the most important human right. It should be prior to all other considerations in economic trade.
2. Establish a state of right in which rules of social life are codified, stable and do not allow arbitrary action, making action incl. State action foreseeable.
3. Freedom of contract required with the insurance of implementing the contract through judicial system in case of failure.
4. Pricing freedom which is one of the essential foundations as a means of coordination of individual actions and to ensure disclosure to buy or invest.

It is important that all public and private partners share the same vision concerning the economic approach to undertake. Investors need perennial economic laws that allow initiatives and provide a legible and clear outline to the pursued strategy.

Need to modernize the institutional framework

These stated concerns reflect the difficulties of the Algerian transition toward a market economy and those of the necessary modernization of the institutional framework governing the activities of the company. It is important for our country to learn from its past economic failures.

The current Algerian economic environment is, in many aspects, similar to the one of the 1970s, namely:

- The availability of tremendous financial resources
- The predominance of petroleum origin taxation
- A context of significant increases in the international oil prices
- A strong need for high levels of public expenses
- Budgetary savings is the only way available to meet urgent social needs

Heavy constraints are also essentially the same:

- The increase in public investment generates a more proportional increase in imports
- The increase in consumption through the income is also reflected, in large part, on the demand for imported products
- The abilities of non-hydrocarbon exports are still limited
- The productivity of capital and labor factors is strongly constrained by the lack of efficiency and the inadequacy of the financial and banking systems as well as the educational training system.



As it was the case in the 1970s, political growth is subject to the vagaries of a cyclical downturn in the international oil market. The risks are now magnified if we consider:

- The growing population which aggravates the high cost of food dependency in the context of inefficiency of agricultural production system
- The protection of domestic markets, which could serve as a form of transitional valve to facilitate the development of new industries, but is instead, severely limited by binding international commitments
- The relative shortage of our oil resources.

In order to cope with these constraints, the private sector, the distribution of wealth, and the employment creation, have to be associated with the definition of policy guidelines for national economic growth, knowing that there is a need to place the private sector at the center of government economic public policies.

Actions of economic policy design should, therefore, aim at raising efficiency in the allocation of investment, maximizing volume of investment, growth and allocation of savings, strengthening of market mechanisms, and organizing the general system of the functioning of the economy.

It is in this context that the Forum des Chefs d'Entreprises suggested, in its contribution to the National Economic and Social Pact, a matrix of concrete actions for a process of economic policy centered on the private sector. This was recommended in order to revive the national economic and social development on a sustainable basis.



Bilateral cooperation in the renewable energy between Egypt and Denmark



*By Eng. Ahmed Kamal, Executive Director
Environmental Compliance Office and Sustainable Development (ECO
SD), Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI)*

Under the supervision of Dr. Sherif El Gabaly, the FEI Environmental Compliance Office and Sustainable Development has held a comprehensive conference to explore Egyptian Danish partnership cooperation program to support the implementation of new and renewable energy applications in various industries. The conference was held in the presence of Khalid Ibrahim, head of the Engineering Export Council of Egypt and Ms. Kinga Valeria, representative of the Federation of Danish Industry with involvement of the National Bank of Egypt and a various industrial enterprises representatives in engineering, metallurgy and food sectors.

Dr. Sherif El Gabaly, chairman of the steering committee of the Environmental Compliance Office, mentioned that ECO provides access to soft loans for funding industrial equipment serving cleaner production applications and energy saving. Loan amounts could reach EGP 3 million per enterprise carrying a 2.5% annual interest rate with one year grace period and a repayment period up to five years. These loans could be obtained through the National Bank of Egypt or other participating banks. Eng. Ahmed Kamal, the executive director of the Environmental Compliance Office, mentioned that ECO had successfully financed 185



industrial enterprises to implement environmental projects with total investment value of EGP 215 million. The office share was EGP 150 million and the industrial enterprises participated by the rest of the amount. He declared that the office affords great prominence to foreign partnerships which allows for investment opportunities, transferring of new technology and increase of employment opportunities. In addition to their role in improving work conditions and protecting the employees in the work environment such projects aim to adjust the positions of the factories with the laws and the environmental regulations which in turn will impact on improving the quality of the product and increase its competitiveness locally and globally.

Eng. Ahmed Kamal also pointed to the environmental and financial benefits that return to the industrial enterprises as a result of reducing energy-, water- and raw materials consumption, as well as the benefits from improving product quality and waste reduction.

On the other hand the recovery period of these environmental investments range between 4 to 6 years and this is an attractive point for investors to improve the environment next to get economic returns.

Kinga Valeria, Federation of Danish Industry representative confirmed that Danish investors are looking for opportunities for investments with the Egyptian side through building new economic entities as they see promising future for investment in Egypt. She pointed out that the Danish investment fund for the developing countries (IFU) provides helping guidelines and fund investments to the Danish companies to invest in Egypt.

She also highlighted that recently the Danish Investment Fund has funded nearly 20 investments in Egypt in various sectors such as cement, infrastructure, industry and tourism.

Khaled Hosni, National Bank Of Egypt representative has presented the bank services to the industrial sector, he defined the small and medium enterprises concept and the Bank role in supporting the development of those enterprises. Furthermore he mentioned the attractive reasons for enterprises to be financed from the bank, with respect to programs and banking services offered by the bank to its customers. He also gave helping guidelines to understanding how to reduce the financing burden on the project and the differences between interest rates and declining interest rates cut.

Khalid Ibrahim, Engineering Export Council head mentioned that the number of companies that exist in the Egyptian export sector are 250 companies and during the next phase the council aims to expand the base of exporting companies to all the countries around the world, especially small businesses (that include fewer than 50 employees) and medium (50 to 200 employee), and that is to widen the number of exporters in the engineering sector.

Also he added that the Council, through the cooperation between Egyptian and Danish companies, aims to increase the collaboration and the trade exchange between the two countries and raise the level of Egyptian companies working in the field of export and accordingly raise the quality in addition to the importance of the engineering industry, which exceed 27



% of the total partnerships that are funded by the Office in 9 different sectors.

Those statements concluded the conference and FEI and DI now work on the points above as well as on the continuous strengthening of the good relationship.

A brief overview of the shape of entrepreneurship in Algeria

Entrepreneurship and innovation are powerful ways to create a dynamic economy. As such, businesses' contributing capacity is, in all respects, essential for the advancement of progress and improvement of the living conditions of the population. Thus, Algerian companies are able to show their dynamism by augmenting their contribution to national economic growth through providing 80% of the added value produced outside the oil and natural gas sector.

The emergence and dissemination of a culture of entrepreneurship in Algerian society, the development of entrepreneurial skills as well as the expansion of the private sector are therefore issues of prime importance. First, because the success of the reforms undertaken - which demand a transformation of the legal and institutional framework of the economy - depends on this emergence, second, because it is the only way to ensure sufficient levels of employment for the population and curb poverty and social instability.

Indeed, the easier it is for innovators and entrepreneurs to turn their ideas



into projects and then into reality, the faster it is for jobs and economic opportunities for society as a whole to follow.

In this respect, much has been done in recent years through government agencies to promote and support start-ups. Also, macro-economic policies implemented have certainly had a significant impact on entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, much progress is still to be accomplished in two main directions:

Practical Field

It is necessary to achieve better symbiosis between legal norms of production and the constraints experienced on the ground by the entrepreneur. For example it may be noted that too often laws and regulations, which are generally well conceived in technical terms, do not sufficiently take into account the cost dimensions they impose on businesses that must comply with them. Simply put, the concern for order that drives national legislators would greatly benefit by being immersed in the constraints experienced by the entrepreneur on the ground.

Improving the business environment

Business launching environment is an area in which current levels remain below expectations. Obviously, Algeria is not creating enough businesses. Over 2 million SMEs would be required in order to satisfy the employment needs of the population, achieve a sufficient level of integration and diversification of the economy, revitalize regions, develop non-oil exports and reduce imports.

Moreover, entrepreneurship success necessarily involves an organization that promotes synergies between effective training structures and support for innovation and is in search of genuine technology and know-how transfer. Such an organization involves the design of renewed policies for primary and secondary education, higher education, research, professional training, and of partnerships that ensure the development of competitive capabilities, innovation and creative dynamism.

Furthermore, it is also important to reduce bureaucracy across the Algerian economic spectrum in order to reduce barriers to creativity and promote vitality. Initiatives to develop and stimulate creativity have been carried out in recent years – the example of the success of the GEW (Global Entrepreneurship Week) is evidence enough of the need for this kind of initiatives. The first business angel initiative in the Maghreb (Casbah Business Angels) is also evidence of this enthusiasm. This will, however, have to be supported by the development of venture capital and the development of capital entities which are needed to find funding sources for new growth.



A talk about Entrepreneurship... Interview with Mehdi Bendimerad



Member of the Executive Committee of the Forum des Chefs d'Entreprises (FCE-Algeria), President of NAPEO Algeria (North Africa Partnership for Economic Opportunity), and organizer of the GEW (Global Entrepreneurship Week)

How do you define Entrepreneurship?

Entrepreneurship is to undertake an action whose purpose is to create wealth by transforming ideas and innovations into goods or services.

What is the purpose of celebrating the World Entrepreneurship Week and what actors should be involved?

The Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) is the largest global event that celebrates innovators and job creators who launch startups and contribute to economic growth and human welfare.

Each November during one week, a large number of activities are organized all over the world, at local, national and global level in order to help business starters explore their potential. These activities connect participants to potential collaborators, mentors, and even investors, through competitions and networking events on a large scale. Millions of people participate to this celebration, and initiate the next stage of their own entrepreneurial approach. New startups move into action. Mentors connect with new entrepreneurs and help them throughout their process.



Meanwhile, researchers and policy makers explore new methods enabling innovators and job creators reach higher levels.

Founded in 2008, this initiative has been growing and covered 131 countries in 2012, with overwhelming support of celebrities, entrepreneurs, heads of state, ministers and other leaders around the world. However, the GEW is more than an awareness raising campaign. It supplies thousands of partners with new methods and interventions designed to help entrepreneurs.

The leitmotif of the GEW:

Dealing with freeing up new ideas and turning them into actions - identifying opportunities, taking risks, solving problems, being creative, building relationships and learning from both failure and success.

What is the problem behind developing entrepreneurship in Algeria?

Entrepreneurship is facing a major problem: the ecosystem. Without a clean environment, entrepreneurship cannot develop. An effort is made by the government through consultation with employers particularly through the tripartite system (i.e. dialogue between government, employers' associations, and workers' unions), but the measures are struggling to be applied.

Administration should make major changes and fight against bureaucracy which is the bottleneck challenge to unleash entrepreneurship.

How can we invest enough money to develop entrepreneurship while not being interested in the level and state of mind of the staff in charge of implementing the process? This applies to all laws that regulate economic activity. In other words, administration should be serving companies.

Does the legal status affect the business operations and development?

When addressing the question of the legal status, you talk about family businesses and SMEs status. Do you really think that this is a barrier to entrepreneurship? Ford, L'Oreal and many other multinationals have been family businesses at the beginning, which refutes the idea that the legal status may impede the development of entrepreneurship. This is in our opinion the meaning of governance: setting up an effective team and applying modern management techniques that make the difference. We must abandon the archaism and position ourselves in a global market.

How important is women's entrepreneurship in Algeria?

We take care of women's entrepreneurship in our country. In terms of public policies, there is a Ministry in charge of family doing a lot for entrepreneurship: conferences, meetings etc.

Is it enough?

Of course not. Resources must be expanded to specifically feminine funding. The incubators should also support female specificity. Women represent more than a half of our society; if we neglect this part of the society, we deprive a substantial portion of wealth that women can create.



→ **ALGERIA Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW)**

The Algeria GEW intervenes in a context characterized by the desire to "boost" the development of entrepreneurship in Algeria as well as the employability of young entrepreneurs. By facilitating contacts and exchanges, GEW ALGERIA wants to be an incubator of ideas and a catalyst causing a positive response from all stakeholders in order to create dynamics. The organization of the Entrepreneurship Week in Algeria brought local entrepreneurs, youth leaders, investors, scientists, businessmen and politicians all together, to share and explore their potential and talent in innovation and creativity.

In 2013, GEW ALGERIA was held 18th-24th of November and included:
738 activities taking place in 48 wilayas (provinces) across the country
270 partners and 111,400 participants

Partners include: associations, consultants, research laboratories, business schools, universities and colleges, scientific clubs and entrepreneurship centers.

→ **Start-Up Challenge**

Competition launched by the NAPEO (**North Africa Partnership for Economic Opportunity**) 2 years ago that gathered:

- 900 projects' leaders
- Identified in 24 Bootcamp organized in 22 wilayas (provinces).
- 94 projects were selected in order to benefit from free training.
- 4 national laureates won a check of € 2,500.

The Global Entrepreneurship Week has four objectives:

Inspiring: Initiate youth to entrepreneurship and demonstrate that this is an interesting opportunity in terms of career plan.

Connecting: Networking youth across borders to discover new ideas at the crossroads of cultures and specialties.

Guiding / giving advice: Integrating active and inspired entrepreneurs worldwide to coach, advise future generations to achieve their dreams.

Engaging: Show to political leaders how entrepreneurship is vital to the economy of a nation and to the development of its culture.

→ **Casbah: The First Business Angels in Algeria**

Launched in 2012, Casbah Business Angels is the first independent network of Business Angels to emerge in Algeria. Launched by Algerians CEOs from Silicon Valley, CBA is a group of entrepreneurs and investors who are willing to invest their time and money in new and existing businesses. CBA is also a networking platform where investors and entrepreneurs can meet in order to exchange ideas, advice and investment opportunities.

Whether by accompanying actions on the medium and long term (coaching, provision of expertise, quarterly monitoring follow up), or by providing



financing (minority equity participation), experience and privileged access to key business contacts, business angels can play an accelerator service role for Algerian champions of tomorrow.

Casbah Business Angels has the following objectives:

Involving and mobilizing a network of Algerian and International Business Angels (USA, Europe, etc.) involved to support young Algerian entrepreneurs with high potential

Sourcing and supporting the best Algerian projects wishing to succeed in their development by meeting experienced and committed professionals in the economic development of the Maghreb region and Algeria in particular.

Helping to improve the Algerian and Maghreb entrepreneurial ecosystems especially in building new relationships between local entrepreneurs, international innovation networks, and the best talents of the Algerian diaspora who evolve internationally.



Report 1st working group meeting Marrakech, Morocco, February 16th 2014

In connection with the third 'Forum des Entrepreneurs Maghrebins' in Marrakech, Morocco on 17-18th of March, the AE-network held its first working group meeting of 2014. Delegations from Algeria, Denmark, Egypt, GCC, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia participated in the meeting. The Danish Ambassador to Morocco, Tunisia, and Mauritania, HE Mr. Michael Lund Jeppesen held a dinner speech during the network dinner explaining about the room for enhancing trade with the Northern African countries in the wake of the efforts to improve the intra-Maghreb trade.

During the meeting following issues were discussed:

 **The development of the B2B Platform was presented by Mr. Sellami from UTICA.**

Microsoft has offered to deliver the software platform free of charge. The membership structure was discussed (possibility for A (free of charge) and B (add on services requiring fee) membership) and following was agreed: Each BMO had to be "point of entry" for registration in the database – to ensure and verify that the local service provider are able to deliver the necessary service and is a registered company and a member to the relevant BMO.

The B2B platform will constitute a trade promotion tool of the AE-network and thus will not compete with, but rather complement, the future trade policy work of the network. The platform is therefore a business service for each BMO to give to their members.

 **Reminder and update on regional SME Conference 28-29th of April in Amman, by Ms. Abu Taleb, JCI.**

The primary focus for the conference will be the role of chambers and business associations (CBAs) in promoting SME development and growth in the MENA region. The agenda will revolve around the challenges for the SMEs and the output will be concrete recommendations for CBAs on how to overcome these challenges as well as a Road Map to achieve this.


 **The 2013 annual report was adopted and rationale behind 2014 cooperation was outlined by Mr. Kristensen, DI.**



Important deliverables from 2013 included a SME seminar in Egypt and the SME Technical support Unit of JCI, the Red Carpet Visa Program and the re-launch of the Egyptian Food Catalogue, and the social pact by CGEM. In 2014 the network will continue to work on topics such as: regional integration, social dialogue and organizational development and on a bilateral level and DI are also able to provide sessions and workshops to the network on specific policy issues.

 **Start-Up Mena Initiative was presented by Mr. Kristensen, DI.**

It is an initiative to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the MENA region by building on the strong local heritage and adding best practice from EU and US. The ambition with this initiative is on the same level to create an integrated startup ecosystem (life circle system) across the region with strong local presence and a regional hub in UAE. The model will be developed through a three phase strategy: (1) Building the basics of the ecosystem, (2) Creating the components to help startups grow, (3) Securing follow up on funding to help the startups scale. The initiatives will be funded through a combination of government support and private funding and shall gradually ensure a self-sustained system. DI is currently funding a Start-up pilot project in Egypt and behind the initiative is VentureScout, a company specialized in building startup eco-systems around the world and with aggregated knowledge from various groups of activities.

 **Policy issues for 2014 were decided upon in a working group session.**

In 2011, 2012 and 2013 the network agreed upon nine policy issues and 66 recommendations for these policy issues. Through a voting session, two of the nine policy issues were prioritized for 2014:

SME Environment and Vocational Training. Thus, the policy focus of 2014 will be to:

Bring together partners and institutions from public and private sectors to better shape vocational training to the needs of the private sector. Following activity plan was agreed upon:

1. DI will prepare draft TOR for a consultancy firm to conduct a gap analysis
2. DI will prepare a TOR for a consultancy firm to do a benchmarking analysis against the EU on the basis of the gap analysis. The delegates decided the content of the analysis to be:
 - Algeria – Mechanical sector
 - UAE – Healthcare
 - Egypt – Food & Beverages
3. Strategy for the creation of a curriculum for implementation (e.g. awareness campaigns)
4. Lessons learned & best practices for the other AE-network members

 **The formalization of the AE-network was discussed.**



JCI had offered to take the lead on defining how we could formalize the network and FEI/CFI had offered to assist in the process and consequently, a meeting was held in Amman in start February with DI as facilitating partner. The proposal is not to redraw DI or the European dimension of the network, but to add to the activities and to assist the network partners in logistical issues and to implement more activities. Jordan proposed to host the secretariat based on its strategic location in the Mena region, easy accessibility, easy visa procedures and well educated workforce etc. Free working space and running costs for the secretariat is also offered by JCI.

Based on the discussions and the following bilateral talks in the margin of the meeting, it seems that there is a wish to formalize the network, but concerns about the payment structure and the level of DI involvement. The payment structure could be solved by raising DI funding as well as securing sponsorship and a low flat fee for participation in the network (3-400. EURO in total) and by developing future regional services that could generate income for the network (i.e. the B2B platform). There were also suggestions that the secretariat would be servicing the logistics and coordination of the network, while DI and the steering committee focused on the policy and trade promotion content. DI would therefore continue its role as project director overseeing the work of the secretariat in this model.

The next working group meeting will be held in relation to SME conference the 27 April 2014 in Amman, Jordan.





3rd Maghreb Entrepreneurs Forum

In 1989, the five countries Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Algeria, and Mauretania created the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) with the aim of promoting regional integration through free movement of people, services, products, FDI, and capital and adoption of common policies that would support economic and social development. Today, the goals are far from reached. Trade between the Maghreb countries, representing 90 million people, accounts for only 3%, a markedly low percentage compared to similar regional blocs. The absence of regional cooperation represents a loss of 2-3% in the annual regional GDP.

Therefore, to re-launch the UMA implementation process, five employers' and business organisations (mentioned above) created the Employers' Maghreb Union (UME) in 2007 and are now launching the private sector initiative *Maghreb Initiative for Commerce and Investment* (IMCI) to further voice the private sector concerns and active engagement to secure the implementation of the UMA protocols. The overall development objective of the IMCI initiative is to further strengthen regional integration and trade in the Maghreb region with the overall outcome being economic growth, job creation and social development.

The launch of the IMCI took place at the Third Maghreb Entrepreneurs Forum ("3^{ème} Forum des Entrepreneurs Maghrébins") which was held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 17-18th of February 2014. The result of the conference was the signing by the five parties of the "[*Déclaration de Marrakech*](#)" in which the five organisations commit themselves to reinforcing their cooperation with the aim of enhanced trade and accelerating job creation and economic growth. The action plan follows a two-track structure: 1) Supporting the governance structure and capacity of the UME organisation, 2) Concrete policy actions.

While the backdrop of the conference was alarmingly low intra-Maghreb trade figures, the Marrakech Declaration is a significant step in the right direction to unleash the enormous potential.



News & Events



Launching of new website for EU-GCC invest

A new website promoting the investment opportunities in the GCC has been launched by the EU, The FGCCC, the AHK UAE, The AHK Saudi Arabia, and the Eurochambers. The website aims to promote understanding and debate about EU-GCC relations, as well as promoting public awareness of the EU among GCC citizens. It contains investment profiles from the six GCC members, investment reports, and relevant events.

www.eu-gccinvest.eu



Doing business guides for Egypt & Morocco

In order to boost trade and promote investment, DI has published two doing business guides for Morocco and Egypt respectively. Besides providing market and political data, each publication gives concrete advice to businesses wanting to invest or export as well as recommendations for particularly relevant sectors.

The publications can be downloaded at the [AE-network's web page](#).



The Future of Trade in the Islamic World

The Future of Trade in the Islamic World was held 19-28th of March in Sharjah, UAE, with the focus of enhancing trade with and between the world's Islamic nations. It was held during the World Trade Week, Sharjah, which is an annual weeklong series of trade-related conferences, exhibitions, seminars and events that celebrate and promote the importance of trade to the sustainable growth of the local, regional, and global economy. More information can be found [here](#).



Algeria in the final at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress 2014

[The Global Entrepreneurship Congress](#) was held from March 17th-20th of March 2014 in Moscow. The congress is an inter-disciplinary entrepreneurs, investors, researchers, thought leaders and policymakers work together to help bring ideas to life, drive economic growth and expand human welfare. Over the past five years, the Congress has contributed to the expansion of a global entrepreneurial ecosystem, connecting experts and entrepreneurs across borders and sectors to unleash their ideas and transform innovation into reality.

This year, Algeria was in the final in the **Country of the Year Award**, the award that recognizes the best overall Global Entrepreneurship Week campaign. Nominees also include hosts from **Germany**, the **United Kingdom**, **Qatar** and **Mexico**. Past winners of this award were hosts from Cape Verde, Turkey, the Netherlands, Canada and Brazil. [Although the UK won the award](#), Algeria has marked its global excellence in running the best overall Global Entrepreneurship Week Campaign.



 **Libyan Businessmen Council signs Memorandum of Understanding with Confederation of Danish Industry**

reinforced when Mr. Abdenasser Ben Nafaâ, CEO of Libyan Businessmen Council and Mr. Niels Tanderup Kristensen, Deputy Director at the Confederation of Danish Industry signed a MoU in Marrakech, Morocco. The MoU includes cooperation on areas such as public-private dialogue, business meetings, trade fairs, and vocational training.



About the Arab-EU Business Facilitation Network

The Arab-EU Business Facilitation Network is an alliance of 15 leading Business Membership Organizations (BMOs) from the MENA region. Through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, the BMOs have pledged to work strategically together, promoting relevant policy issues within and between their respective countries.

The purpose of the Network is to create a platform from which business associations from the region can discuss the challenges for businesses and identify shared solutions and policy recommendations. A specific emphasis is on improving access to the EU market for businesses in the region. Thus, the Network will contribute to a more enabling business environment for the benefit of growth and development in general.



The 15 BMOs are:

Algeria:	Forum des Chefs des Entreprises (FCE)
Bahrain:	Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI)
Egypt:	Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI)
Jordan:	Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI)
Kuwait:	Kuwait Chamber of Commerce (KCCI)
Lebanon:	Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI)
Libya:	Libyan Businessmen Council (LBC)
Morocco:	Confédération Générale des Entreprises du Maroc (CGEM)
Oman:	Oman Chambers of Commerce and Industry (OCCI)
Palestine:	Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture
Saudi Arabia:	Council of Saudi Chambers (CSC)
Syria:	Damascus Chamber of Industry (DCI)
Tunisia:	Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat (UTICA)
UAE:	Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry
Qatar:	Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Denmark:	The Confederation of Danish Industry (DI)

Meetings and reports

Several times a year – on working group meetings and on the Annual Meeting - the participants meet to discuss the outcomes and prospects of the projects in the AE-Network.

All summaries of the meetings as well as Annual Reports can be found on the [AE-network's webpage](#).

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Confederation of Danish Industry