



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Trade

Directorate E - Neighbouring countries, USA and Canada
South Mediterranean and Middle East

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 <p>Council of the European Union General Secretariat</p>	
Trade Policy Committee	
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NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE TRADE POLICY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: *First EU-GCC Business Forum*

ORIGIN: Commission DG Trade Unit E3

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OBJECTIVE: *For information*

REMARKS:

Delegations will find attached for their information a programme of the first EU-GCC Business Forum organized as one of the events of the FPI Project called “*EU-GCC Business and Trade cooperation facility*” that has been ongoing in the GCC countries since 2014. The registration for this event is possible via <http://eu-gcc.app.rsvpify.com/>.

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EU-GCC
Trade and Business Facility

FIRST EU-GCC BUSINESS FORUM

23 MAY 2016
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

VENUE:

European Economic and Social Committee
Belliardstraat 99
1040 Etterbeek

Funded by the EU



Supporting partner Business Forum 2016



European Economic and Social
Committee Employers' Group

Consortium Partners



Confederation of Danish Industry



Business Forum 2016

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to invite you to the first EU-GCC Business Forum on fostering and strengthening EU and GCC trade relations to be held at European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels, Belgium May 23- 24, 2016.

The Business Forum is organized by the partners of the EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility: Federation of GCC Chambers (FGCCC), the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI) and BUSINESSEUROPE with the support of the European Economic and Social Committee Employers' Group. It is funded by the European Commission.

The Business Forum will take stock of recent developments in EU and GCC economies and bilateral trade, explore opportunities and challenges for trade and investment, discuss specific sectoral opportunities that can support sustainable economic development, and lastly outline the private sector's recommendations. These recommendations will feed into to the EU and GCC political leaders attending the 25th Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and the European Union.

We encourage you to participate in this event and join the discussions to exchange views on engaging the private sector in constructive policy dialogue with government, and would be delighted if you would join us.

Please, complete the registration <http://eu-gcc.app.rsvpify.com/> by 19 May, 2016. The organizing team will review applications based on relevance and space availability. Accepted applicants will receive a confirmation of participation.



PROGRAMME

OPENING SESSION

Speakers:

- H.E. Mr. Ignacio Garcia Berceo , Director , DG Trade, European Commission
- H.E. Ms. Amal Mejren Al Hamad, Ambassador of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf to the European Union
- Ms. Luisa Santos, Director International Relations, BUSINESSEUROPE
- H.E. Mr. Abdulrahman Al Otaishain, Vice Chairman of Federation of GCC Chambers and Chairman of Asharqia Chamber

09:30-10:15

Moderator

- Mr. Niels Kristensen, Project Director, EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility

SETTING THE SCENE: THE EU-GCC ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Speakers:

- H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Al Ageel, Secretary General, Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting
- Mr. Fahad M. Alturki, Chief Economist and Head of Research, Jadwa Investment
- Speaker, DG ECFIN, EU Commission (TBC)

10:15-11:00

Moderator:

- Mr. Oliver Cornock, Managing Editor (Middle East), Oxford Business Group

11:00-11:30

REFRESHMENTS

SESSION ONE | ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND TRANSFORMATION

The GCC have formulated ambitious strategies for diversification, job creation and the building of a more productive and less oil-dependent 'knowledge economy'. Strategies that are reliant on skill alignment, privatization of industries, and most importantly, redefining the role of the private sector in a period of reform. Using insights gained from the roundtables as the foundation, the session will examine the needs of the private sector and its role in times of economic diversification and transformation.

Topics of importance:

- National employment policies and the need for competencies
- The role of the private sector in times of transformation
- Moving from public to private sector employment

11:30-12:30

Panellists:

- Ms. Ania Thiemann, Head of Global Relations and Senior Economist, MENA-OECD Investment Programme, OECD
- Mr. Jassim Salem Al Ansari, CEO (Middle East), CSR Company International
- Dr Ashraf Mishref, Professor at Qatar University

Moderator:

- Mr. Felix Neugart, German Emirati Joint Council for Industry & Commerce, AHK

12:30 -12:35

- Jacek Krawczyk - President of the Employers' Group at EESC

12:30-13:30

LUNCH

SESSION TWO | ENHANCING TRADE, INVESTMENTS AND COMPETITIVENESS

Trade and investment between the EU and GCC is flourishing. The trade between the EU to the GCC has increased by 5.8% on average between 2008 and 2013. Investments into the GCC have equally increased. However, the full potential has not been realised. European companies face several barriers that limit their growth potential and corollary create local growth and jobs. Using insights gained from the roundtables as a stepping stone, this session will examine existing and perceived barriers to trade and investment between the two regions, focussing on the development of private sector and support to SMEs.

Topics of importance:

- Barriers to investment
- Non-tariff barriers to trade
- Harmonization of GCC legal issues, standards and conformity issues
- Private sector development and empowerment

13:30-14:30

Panellists:

- Mr. Imad Al Abdul Qader, Director Investor Attraction, SAGIA
- H.E. Mr. Nabil Molla, Secretary General, Gulf Standard Organisation, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Mr. Jacques Bourgeois, General Delegate of Airbus Group

Moderator :

- Mr. Peter Young, Deputy Head of Unit , DG Trade, European Commission

14:30-15:00

REFRESHMENTS

SESSION THREE | FOSTERING INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

An ecosystem that enable creativity and innovation is essential for the success of any entrepreneur. A number of GCC countries have achieved impressive results in developing their innovation strategies. To succeed, it is equally important to attract entrepreneurs that challenge the status quo. A number of GCC countries are capable of attracting entrepreneurs from outside the GCC while others are still coming to terms with the need. The session will deliberate on identifying the needs of the private sector and particularly that of entrepreneurs.

Topics of importance:

- What are the building blocks of an eco-system for entrepreneurship
- How to create linkages and matchmaking between large and small enterprises
- The role of the private sector and government in innovation policies

15:00-16:00

Panellists:

- Mr. Eric Koch, Adviser, European Commission, Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)
- Mr. Alaa Al Shaikh, CEO of Relativity Group and Bahraini entrepreneur
- Mr Tarik Al Haidari, Board member, Council of Saudi Chambers

Moderator:

- Dr. Crystal Ennis, Leiden University

CLOSING REMARKS:

16:00-16:30

- H.E. Abdulrahim Naqi, Secretary General, Federation of GCC Chambers
- Mr. Niels Kristensen, Project Director, EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility

16:30-18:00

COCKTAIL RECEPTION