



The region's most
established trade and
export finance conference

GTR MENA 2021 VIRTUAL

February 15-17, 2021

Time zone: Gulf Standard Time (GST)

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#GTRMENA

Day One: Monday 15 February

ON-DEMAND

“A year is a long time” – building trade resilience post-2020

Back in February 2020, when GTR last gathered the local trade and trade finance community in Dubai to discuss the leading issues impacting on the region's trade, all the talk was of the build-up to the (now delayed) Expo 2020 and various other ambitious government programmes to further advance the region's role as a trade leader. One year on and the global landscape looks very different. This high-level roundtable will consider the work undertaken to combat the extreme market challenges, from moving corporate functions online and the measures taken to protect supply chains to the impact of government support schemes and need for regional and multilateral collaboration. It will also forecast what lessons can be learned ahead of future 'black swan' events.

Moderator: Eleanor Wragg, Senior Reporter, Global Trade Review (GTR)

Scott Livernore, Chief Economist & Managing Director, Oxford Economics Middle East

Dr Karen Remo, CEO & Co-Founder, New Perspective Media Group

Graham Griffiths, Associate Director, Control Risks

Matthew Hurn, Chairman, Middle East Committee, Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT)

ON-DEMAND

Keynote: Hoping for the best, planning for the worst

One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic was – in the early stages – the stifling of world trade, 80% of which is transported by sea, leaving major supply chains paralysed and having a significant impact on imports and exports, including from economic powerhouses such as China; an economic toll seen by many as even higher than that posed by the 2007-2009 financial crisis, and not seen since WWII. However, recent weeks have seen a rebound ahead of expectations, once again illustrating the resilience of the global shipping sector and its crucial role in maintaining efficient supply chains. This exclusive keynote interview will tell the story of a tumultuous last 12 months.

11.00-11.45

Digitisation in the new normal – taking the next step

Emergency measures brought in to combat the impact of Covid-19 have faced the paper-based world of trade to confront the reality of digital advancement, seen by many as vindication of the proactive measures taken by MENA governments via various ambitious digital transformation programmes; in a region that plays a crucial role in keeping global trade flowing, demand has never been higher for digital solutions, whilst a youthful population also offers a competitive advantage when it comes to adoption. This session will provide an update on the latest developments, including the importance of providing a conducive regulatory framework when it comes to reducing bottlenecks and reflecting a new business landscape.

Moderator: Emmanuelle Ganne, Senior Analyst, Economic Research & Statistics, World Trade Organization (WTO)

Yusuf Ali Khan, Head of Trade for Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan and Turkey, Treasury & Trade Solutions, Citi

Asli Karapinar, Head of Treasury for Middle East & Africa, Schneider Electric Industries

Sumit Roy, President & CMO, TradeAssets

12.30-13.00

Case study: Going live with UAE Trade Connect (UTC)

UAE Trade Connect (UTC), the national platform aimed at digitising trade in UAE, has recently gone live into soft production with its consortium banks. UTC enables banks to exchange trade transactional information on an anonymised basis enabling banks to make informed decisions on trades. This solution is the first of its kind in the UAE, and has been developed using state of the art disruptive technologies. Let us learn more about UTC, its benefits to corporates, banks and the entire trade ecosystem, and the exciting roadmap it has ahead of itself.

Anirudha Panse, Managing Director & Head of Trade Product Management, First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB)

Zulqarnain Javid, Chief Executive Officer, UAE Trade Connect (UTC)

13.30-14.15

Adopting new approaches to risk in the financing of trade

The world of trade and commodity finance has been rocked by what many see as a series of existential threats in recent times, whether it's the collapse of several notable commodity traders or the subsequent retrenchment of international banks, either reducing their exposure or withdrawing completely. This session will seek to address some of the deeper market issues exposed when it comes to risk and financial crime, whether it's concerns regarding overconcentration of liquidity, systems used to monitor and track inventory or the challenges that come with a more diversified pool of lenders.

Jose Lopez-Mateos Payno, Managing Director, Head of Trade Solutions & Advisory, UAE, First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB)

John Galani, Chief Operating Officer, Triterras

14.45-15.30

Embracing ESG – planning for a sustainable future

The discussion around sustainability, SDGs and ESG practices feels like one we have been having at GTR events for many years now, each one characterised by pronouncements of further progress and “now finally being the time” to advance the cause. So what is different about this time? Has the pandemic – seen by many as an example of nature turning on man – focused minds or will economic necessity see a pause in this ‘western phenomenon’ and a return to financing fossil fuels, pivoting back to what the region knows best? Or is the answer somewhat more nuanced than that, with many of the social benefits of industrialisation insufficiently recognised in the value they provide in developing markets? This session will seek to examine the challenges governments, companies (from multinationals to SMEs) and their financiers are facing in ensuring that key lessons are learned, opportunities taken to ‘build back better’ and the necessary plans are in place to learn from what will surely not be ‘the last pandemic’.

Moderator: Rebecca Harding, Chief Executive Officer, Coriolis Technologies

Simon Ring, Global Head of Financial Markets Compliance, Pole Star

Adam Hearne, CEO & Co-Founder, CarbonChain

Okan Dalanay, Head of Structured Trade Finance, EMEA, ADM

16.00-16.45

The haves and have nots – SMEs, local banks and the challenges faced

For all the efforts by states to intervene and support their private sectors, the real impact of the pandemic has been felt by smaller organisations in particular. Measures introduced to relieve the pressures facing SMEs, including lowering or suspending fees for license renewals, the reform of employment regulations to enable greater flexibility, and specific programmes such as the ‘Targeted Economic Support Scheme’ have all helped, but the challenges are frequently greater for SMEs in comparison to larger companies. This has also been a similar story for smaller local banks, who tend to be less capitalised and often more exposed to local SMEs than larger institutions. This session will bring representatives from all sides together to survey the landscape.

Moderator: Jan Ward, Founder & CEO, Corrotherm
Rehan Ali, Head of Business Banking, Wholesale Banking Group, National Bank of Fujairah (NBF)

Christina Struller, Vice-President of Public Affairs, ISMEA, UPS

Betül Kurtulus, Regional Director, Central, Eastern & South-Eastern Europe & the Middle East, FCI

“GTR has always been a great place to network; the content, speakers and panel discussions were well chosen, engaging and relevant to the industry trends.”

L Almeida, Markel International (Dubai) Limited

Day Two: Tuesday 16 February

ON-DEMAND

Navigating choppy waters – the role of innovation in combatting sanctions risk

In a changing global landscape, financial institutions, energy and shipping companies are increasingly mindful of the need for effective compliance operations, ensuring they can trade with confidence across all sectors. With the lucrative petroleum export industry frequently cited as a principal area of concern in terms of sanctions compliance – and with potentially dire financial and reputational consequences for those found to be in violation – this session will consider how innovations in AI and technology can ensure best in class practices for operational and business excellence, highlighting recent developments and potential future changes following the unprecedented events of 2020.

Ami Daniel, Co-Founder & CEO, Windward to be interviewed by John Basquill, Senior Reporter, Global Trade Review (GTR)

ON-DEMAND

Building back better – the role of infrastructure in boosting trade and investment

Perhaps unsurprisingly in a region that includes so many ambitious government transformation programmes, infrastructure plays a key role in MENA trade and investment, from the delayed Expo 2020 to Saudi Vision 2030 to the various renewable energy initiatives taking place across both the GCC and North Africa in particular. It has however taken a hit in 2020, with many projects delayed and others put on hold as investors understandably urge caution. This session will examine some of the collective initiatives when it comes to areas such as uniform buildings standards, risk mitigation and dispute resolution, all of which have an crucial role in driving efficiency and investor confidence to subsequently boost trade.

Rob Jackson, Market Director, Americas, Europe, Middle East, Africa (AEMEA), RICS

Chris Seymour, Managing Director, Mott MacDonald Middle East

11.00-11.45

The dawning of a new era – what does the change in UAE-Israel relations mean for trade?

The recent opening up of diplomatic relations between the UAE and Israel brings with it enormous opportunities for trade between the two markets, removing barriers to businesses links previously not permitted, shortening trade routes and also making it easier to deal with other markets such as Europe. With estimates suggesting trade between the two nations could eventually total US\$4bn a year and create up to 15,000 jobs across a range of sectors from technology to healthcare and agriculture, this session will seek to determine what this much-heralded dawning of a new era is likely to mean in practical terms for the region's trade financiers.

Moderator: John Basquill, Senior Reporter, Global Trade Review (GTR)

Idan Shapira, Head of Participation & International Syndication, Bank Leumi

Nick Cochrane-Dyett, Special Adviser, BP Middle East; Chairman, British Business Group Abu Dhabi

Sanjeev Dutta, Executive Director, Commodities & Financial Services, DMCC

Keri Leicher, Principal Consultant, Pangea Risk

“Once again, GTR pulled off an amazing event in 2020. Great networking, great content – an absolute must-attend!”

R Harding, Coriolis Technologies

13.15-14.00

Saudi Arabia – ruling the roost or left out on a limb?

2020 was much anticipated for Saudi Arabia, its year of leading the G20 and hosting the annual leaders' summit in Riyadh in November (now being held virtually), but as is the case for the world at large, things have not quite gone to plan. The pandemic, combined with a sharp fall in oil price, has slowed economic growth, whilst the changing dynamics of regional diplomatic relations – such as the recent UAE-Israel peace deal – could have further consequences on the Kingdom's regional trading relationships and the ambitious goals of Saudi Vision 2030, which includes youth empowerment, technological advancement and reduced dependence on hydrocarbons in pursuit of sustainability. This session will examine these trends, as well as the role of private sector and financial community in supporting the various developmental projects necessary to maintain strategic Saudi influence across the wider MENA region.

14.30-15.15

Only the tip of the iceberg – can the south-south trade corridor go further?

Africa's status as the youngest and most promising global economic market shows no sign of halting even in a pandemic, with the UAE alone the 4th largest global investor on the continent (behind China, Europe and the US) with a strong presence in markets as diverse as Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania. With Dubai playing a significant role as a facilitator and 'launchpad' into Africa, particularly from other markets such as Asia, this session will offer key details on existing flows and volumes through the Africa-MENA-Asia trade corridor, as well as examining how the dynamics of exports (petroleum products) and imports (agriculture) have changed.

Robert Besseling, Founder & CEO, Pangea Risk

ON-DEMAND

Regional insights – financing uncertainty in North Africa

As governments, sponsors and lenders wait for the consequences of 2020 to pass, North Africa has been one region hit by this 'wait and see' approach, as appetite to finance transaction in key sectors dwindles and projects put on hold. This has been particularly challenging for more complex and longer-term transactions in areas like infrastructure, offering potentially huge knock-on effects for trade as a consequence. This session will seek to examine how the current situation is likely to impact on the ability of various North African markets to access finance, both in terms of capital constraints for international banks and the need for local banks to preserve cash, at least in the short-term. It will also look at the role of ECAs and multilaterals, not least as many ECAs have themselves pivoted their focus to supporting their domestic exporters rather than support capital expenditure in foreign markets.

Nabil Frik, Managing Director, Head of Africa & Middle East, British Arab Commercial Bank to be interviewed by Robert Besseling, Founder & CEO, Pangea Risk

16.00-16.45

Sanctions and trade wars – where does the region's priorities lie?

2020 saw a number of key shifts when it comes to geopolitics and national security, with many wondering what the implications of a new US administration may be for Middle East trade. This special interactive breakout session will consider the leading issues around this, from likely changes to the 'robust' sanctions regime and potential impact on Iran (and oil prices), to likely ramifications of a more multilateralist US approach when it comes to Chinese influence across the region.

John Smith, Partner, Morrison & Foerster LLP; Former Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)

Rebecca Harding, Chief Executive Officer, Coriolis Technologies

Day Three: Wednesday 17 February

ON-DEMAND

Keynote interview: The practicalities of post-Covid recovery

With promising signs when it comes to the transformative nature of vaccines in finding a path beyond the current pandemic, delivering what will be billions of doses to the entire world will bring with it hugely complex logistical obstacles across the entire global supply chain. Governments have been advised to begin careful planning of their supply chains and of their logistical networks to ensure they are prepared and able to distribute vaccines, whilst questions over local production capabilities and concerns over 'vaccine nationalism' are likely to continue. This session will consider the role of the global trade community in preparing for the 'biggest product launch in history', how technological advances such as blockchain could play their part, and the practical challenges in managing 'the supply chain to save the world'.

Eric Ten Kate, Vice-President, Life Sciences, Agility GIL & **Mitch Wilson**, Chief Executive Officer, Global Response Aid to be interviewed by **Eleanor Wragg**, Senior Reporter, Global Trade Review (GTR)

**“GTR does it again and again!
GTR MENA 2020 had the best
selection of attendees, panelists
and exhibitors focused on SCF.
This year I attended both the India
and MENA events, and both were
top class. I have now added these
events to my annual calendar.”**

R Debnath, Cogence Labs

ON-DEMAND

Does trade need to clean up its act?

Financial crime has been placed very much in the spotlight recently, whether it's sophisticated cyber-attacks on remote systems or cruder fraud practices such as those experienced in the commodities sector. From a MENA perspective, recent attention has shifted to the UAE, as international pressure mounts and regulators and standards bodies express dissatisfaction at efforts to tackle money laundering and sanctions violations in sectors such as oil trading, diamonds and gold. This session will consider what is needed to improve matters, from more effective investigating and prosecuting powers, greater penalties for those found to be in violation, reputational and jurisdictional risks for corporates as well as the likely impact on the region should this further exacerbate the trend for banks to either retrench or even withdraw from financing trade and commodities.

Lakshmi Kumar, Policy Director, Global Financial Integrity

11.00-11.45

Better together – can technology and innovation help close the trade finance gap?

The significant unmet demand globally for trade-related financing and supply chain facilities has been well documented and showed no signs of slowing even before the pandemic, with the Asian Development Bank estimating that the global trade finance gap now stands equivalent to US\$1.5tn, with companies of sizes feeling the strain of that but with the pressure on SMEs perhaps the most acutely felt. This session will consider how a three-pronged collaborative market approach involving technological innovation, new regulatory priorities and the role of export credit can play a role in reducing the gap and supporting trade growth.

Sudhir Dole, Chief Executive Officer, Trade Information Network

Carl Wegner, Chief Executive Officer, Contour

13.15-14.00

Are corporates still the missing link in trade 2.0?

The current climate has seen banks, fintechs, alternative financiers and logistics companies increasing their efforts to meet new challenges and ensure they remain competitive, but it often feels that 'the client' is on the periphery of these discussions. This special breakout will bring representatives from various corporates together to highlight their key challenges and best practice responses to adapting to new technologies in the 'flight to digital', delivering the corporate ESG response to stakeholder concerns, and managing financial risks to business continuity planning and the science of disruption.

Moderator: Peter Matza, Former Engagement Director, Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT)
Ruta Jukneviute, Group Treasury, Loan Operations & Structured Finance, Al-Futtaim
Princy Royce, Treasury Manager, Middle East, Africa & India, National Oilwell Varco

14.30-15.15

New horizon challenges for the regional TCI market

Unless their counterparts in Europe, the regional trade credit insurance market in the UAE was not as severely impacted when it came to events being cancelled, claims and increased demand for business interruption policies. However, this does not mean an absence of challenges on the horizon, from premium increases and loss ratios, more frequent overdues, limit reductions and more conservative limit approvals for new customers, additional political risk dimensions and more sectors being flagged as 'red'. This involved discussion will bring market leaders together to discuss day-to-day operational challenges and requirements encountered by those working across this unique and niche community.

Moderator: Mahan Bolourchi, Managing Director, RKH DIFC GCS

Zena Brake, Credit Intelligence Director, Euler Hermes Middle East

Adam Worrall, Executive Director, Trade Risk Distribution, First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB)

Leroy Almeida, Senior Executive Officer, Senior Underwriter & Head of Middle East, Markel International (Dubai)

15.45-16.30

Bringing the market together – industry dialogue and outreach programmes

As a leading industry association representing the rights and interests of banks, financial institutions and service providers involved in trade risk and asset origination and distribution, the ITFA Middle East Regional Committee is mandated to address the broader issues of the changing dynamics in trade finance in the MENA region, with an emphasis on the impact of Covid-19 on the latter as well as the advents in digitalisation of trade and increased focus on ESG. This interactive panel discussion will provide an update on the latest trends and outreach activities, also focusing on the importance of encouraging and fostering young talent at such a challenging time.

“I was delighted to participate in GTR MENA 2020 and for GTR to highlight and showcase the importance of the need to address sustainable supply chains as well as to be involved in the tech showcase. I had the opportunity to learn more about some really interesting fintech start-ups that are creating solutions we need.”

L McAuley, Global Trade Professionals Alliance (GTPA)

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Upcoming event

March 10-12, 2021

GTR INDIA 2021 VIRTUAL



Driving trade and export growth

GTR India will return in 2021 as a hybrid event, offering an extended offering as the country's leading trade-based gathering for networking and knowledge sharing, with a virtual event on March 10-11 and a physical event in Mumbai in October.

For over 15 years GTR India has provided critical market insight combined with unrivalled networking opportunities with leading experts on the country's trade environment and trade finance sector.

Top 3 themes in 2021



gtreview.com/gtrindia

#GTRIndia

Upcoming event

March 24-25, 2021

Connecting with regional trade finance experts

GTR West Africa will return in 2021 virtually, providing an extended digital offering as the region's leading event for trade discussion and networking on March 24-25.

Harnessing the vast potential of technology for connecting West African trade leaders with their peers, this online gathering promises a comprehensive programme of live and on-demand debate, discussion and engagement, welcoming the region's leading practitioners in trade, export and commodity finance to explore the latest developments, strategies and solutions employed to drive growth.



GTR WEST AFRICA 2021 VIRTUAL

Top sectors discussed in 2020



Regulation

Agribusiness

Infrastructure

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#GTRWestAfrica

Upcoming event

September 22, 2021

GTR MENA 2021 DUBAI



GTR MENA returns to Dubai for a one day event on September 22, 2021.

As part of its hybrid offering for 2021, GTR MENA will descend on Dubai in September for an exclusive one day physical gathering. This will include an extensive programme, full exhibition and that much missed opportunity for participants to network and connect with key experts, industry peers and potential clients.

Exhibitors expected in 2021



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