

The MENA region's leading
trade finance discussion
and networking hub

GTR MENA 2024 DUBAI

#GTRMENA

Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Dubai, UAE
February 20-21, 2024

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The Middle East & North Africa's leading trade and export finance discussion and networking hub

GTR MENA returns to Dubai on February 20-21, where over 95 industry experts will consider the latest trends over the past 12 months and share leading insights into the current state and future trends global trade, exports and supply chain financing.

The conference offers numerous valuable networking opportunities in the exhibition hall, featuring over 30 exhibitors and over five hours of networking breaks to facilitate connections among over 900 delegates within the trade and export finance realm. Don't miss your chance to join the unrivalled opportunity to catch up with old friends and build those crucial new market connections, all under one roof.



"Awesome event with a packed and relevant agenda for the current macro-economic scenario."

S Kuriyakkattil, Bank FAB

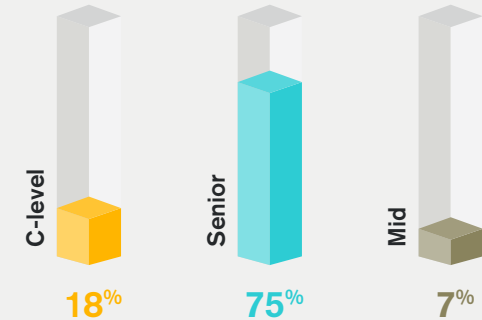
Jumeirah Emirates Towers (Godolphin Ballroom)
Dubai, UAE

February 20-21, 2024

6 big topics

- BRICS+, post-oil trade and the business of geopolitics
- Is MENA the next centre for supply chain finance?
- Payables, receivables, inventory and releasing trapped cash: Key priorities for corporates
- Strategic commodity supply and the role of state-backed support
- A further step towards paperless trade: The Electronic Trade Documents Act
- What are the next big trends in trade and supply chain innovation?

Job titles represented in 2023

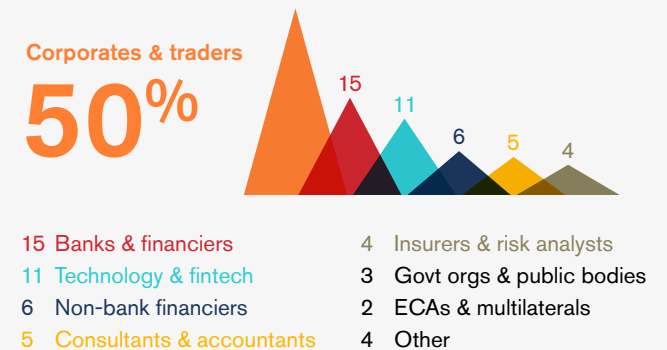


Vital statistics in 2023

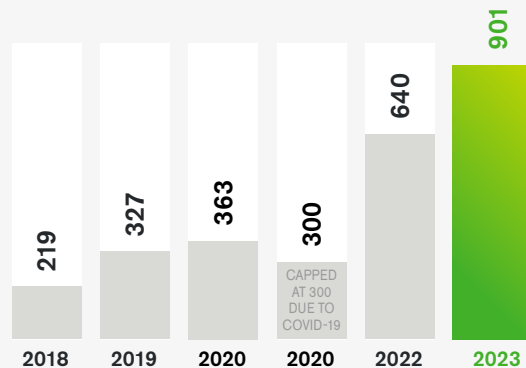


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Attendees by sector in 2023



Year-on-year attendee increase



Find out more

Ed Virtue
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Senior Marketing Executive
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Day One: Tuesday 20 February, 2024 Morning

08.00-09.00 Registration and networking

09.00-09.10

Chair's opening remarks

Ramia Farrage, Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

09.10-09.20

Global trade trends: Challenges and opportunities

This opening session will welcome **John W.H. Denton AO**, Secretary General, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) to a special fireside chat, reflecting on the global trade landscape and providing perspectives on the policy developments needed for a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient global trading system.

09.20-09.40

Global economy: Splits, splinters and new horizons

The global economy has proved resilient in 2023 but the lagged impact of a broad rise in interest rates, stubbornly high inflation and geopolitical shocks will constrain growth in 2024. A dip in the road to recovery is anticipated next year, at a time when governments across much of the globe will find themselves with limited scope to adjust monetary and fiscal policy levers. Much will depend on the ability and willingness of businesses to consolidate operations, explore new avenues and invest in the future. They must do this against a backdrop of greater global economic fragmentation, more supply-chain reorganisation, rapidly evolving digital transformation and evolving climate change impacts and policies.

Risks abound but, as ever, opportunities arise from adversity and especially for those with an appetite for change. This session will seek to find answers to some of the big questions regarding the global economic outlook in 2024 and beyond:

- How will major economies fare as we move into 2024? Which regions of the world will prove to be the most dynamic and which will lag behind?

- What lies ahead for global financial markets as major western central banks begin to unwind their monetary policy tightening cycle?
- Can the US and major economies in western Europe emerge from their sluggish growth trajectory of recent years?
- What does a deceleration of the Chinese economy look like and what does it mean for the wider region and global economy?
- How will geopolitical factors, including wars in Ukraine and the Middle East coupled with US-China rivalries, affect global trade, investment and supply chains?

Pratibha Thaker, Regional Director, Middle East & Africa, Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)

09.40-10.00

BRICS+, post-oil trade and the business of geopolitics

Recent geopolitical and diplomatic developments have very much placed the Middle East at the heart of global trade, from the expansion of the BRICS in January 2024 to regional leaders such as the UAE and Saudi channelling their oil reserves into diversification programmes (smart cities, ICT and services, military and defence), all with the aim of ushering in a new era of socio-economic development and closer global collaboration. This session will seek to find answers to some of the region's biggest questions, including:

- As the region looks to diversify its trade partners, reinforce supply chain security and decouple from China, how will this impact on the previously dominant relationship with its largest purchaser of oil and gas?
- How significant are the developments around the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) as a counterbalance to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)?
- The Africa opportunity: To what extent are sovereigns looking to Sub-Saharan markets to address food security and the supply of rare earth metals?
- What are the likely ramifications of the Israel-Hamas war for trade, both in terms of future FTAs and also the potential impact on regional oil output?

Robert Besseling, Founder & Chief Executive, Pangea-Risk

10.00-10.25

Fireside chat: Taking an active role in developing export markets

This special interview-style session will shed light on the role of export credit in strengthening competitiveness in international trade and innovation, from establishing new partnerships and signing bilateral agreements to implementing digital transformation projects in key markets to foster global business growth.

Points for consideration will include empowering local exporters to expand their international presence, enhancing global competitiveness and thus increasing contribution to domestic GDP, accelerating commercial and economic activities to the benefit of both exporters and their buyers (who often have their own transformation programmes), and solidifying relations with key trading partners, showcasing commitment to mutual prosperity and growth.

Raja Al Mazrouei, Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Credit Insurance (ECI) & **Raj Jit Singh Walia**, Board Director, DP World Trade Finance
in conversation with Ramia Farrage, Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

10.25-10.35

Maintaining UAE trade growth

As the export financing arm of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Abu Dhabi Exports Office (ADEX) offers financing solutions to exporters to help increase the UAE's trade volumes and promote its export business in global markets. This address will highlight how ADEX is empowering Emirati exporters to expand their international presence and enhance their competitiveness on a global scale, thus increasing their contribution to the economy.

Natasha Abdulelah Saleh, Project Manager, Abu Dhabi Export Office (ADEX)

10.35-11.10 Networking break

“Great event for connecting professionals in trade finance and to discuss relevant topics.”

A Tulean, Bank ABC

“Great networking place, very interesting insight views, seasoned panel of experts and speakers.”

L Morel, APICORP

“Terrific event, have had the privilege of speaking at past forums. Very solid topics, senior stakeholder attendance, well organised – put on your short list!”

J Logan, Pelican

“Great event and by far the largest in terms of corporates, financial institutions and fintechs attending. Well done indeed!”

Y Khan, Mashreq

Day One: Tuesday 20 February, 2024 Morning Stream A

Select either [Stream A](#) or [Stream B](#)

Stream A

Chair: Peter Matza, Council Member, Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT)

11.10-11.55

Is MENA the next centre for supply chain finance?

Despite small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) representing 95% of businesses and 40% of GDP across MENA, they are often unable to secure sufficient access to trade finance through conventional means. This brings with it huge opportunities for providers of supply chain finance – both payables and receivables – and SCF programmes that allow buyers to maximise their working capital and access liquidity through optimising payment terms for suppliers and customers, whilst offering funders advantageous returns.

This session will consider the key trends across this important market segment, from the migration of SCF from bank-based business to platforms allowing participation from multiple funders, to how such systems allow banks and fintechs to collaborate rather than compete, to how increased risk sharing can help resilience, particularly during periods of economic downturn.

Moderator: Syed Hassan Javed, Group Head of GTB Sales, Gulf International Bank

Sivakumar Kuriyakkattil, GTB Head of Open Account Product Solutions, First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB)

Syed Khurram Zaeem, Managing Director, Head of Trade, Working Capital & Transaction Banking, Africa Middle East, Standard Chartered Bank

Deeraj Karnani, Head of Enterprise Sales, TASConnect

Hamayoun Khan, Head of Trade Finance & Working Capital, Commercial Bank of Dubai

“GTR MENA remains the industry event for all things trade related. If you are connected to trade, this is the event to be at”

A Xavier, Barclays

11.55-12.20

Spotlight: Public sector supply chain finance

The MENA region's large and expanding public sector infrastructure needs necessitate significant procurement activity, stimulating supply chains and subsequent extensive financing requirements. Various government initiatives and collaborations have been launched as a result of this, introducing new supply chain finance mechanisms to government suppliers with the aim of providing greater sources of liquidity.

This session will consider the evolving role of public sector supply chain finance, from helping to speed up payment of receivables to reducing the cost of working capital for SMEs in particular, all in support of the wider objective of long-term sustainable growth.

Shaker Zainal, Chief Business Officer, Emirates Development Bank & **Bhriquraj Singh**, Chief Product Officer, GTRF, HSBC *in conversation with* **Simon Cook**, Partner, Sullivan & Worcester UK

12.20-13.05

Sustainable supply chains: A new growth driver

Even prior to the UAE's hosting of COP28, the growth in popularity of supply chain finance has brought with it increasing demand for banks to provide sustainable programmes as a means of encouraging companies to meet their ESG requirements in a cost-effective manner. At a time of growing awareness of the role various industry sectors play in global emissions, where large companies are no longer able to hide behind the shield of long and opaque supply chains to avoid their responsibilities, FIs are increasingly looking to incentivise their clients to improve their sustainability credentials, whilst the advent of 'deep-tier' finance has sought to redress the traditional power imbalance found down the supply chain. This session will consider a range of themes, including:

- Providing greater financial support for smaller businesses down the supply chain, easing working capital constraints and enabling increased investment into companies and their operations

- Facilitating access to affordable financing to help incentivise ESG-aligned activities along the value chain and promote supply chain stability and resilience
- Allowing those operating deepest down the tiers to leverage large buyer balance sheets and utilise the credit rating of 'anchor corporates' when applying for finance
- Enabling suppliers to sell their receivables for early discounted payment in line with the level of credit risk
- How advancements in digital technologies are making greater levels of transparency and data sharing possible.

Moderator: David Leslie, General Manager, Global Trade & Receivable Finance, SAB

Johnson Kunnummel Mani, Senior Manager, Group Treasury, Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA)

Motasim Iqbal, Managing Director, Regional Head Transaction Banking Sales, Africa Middle East, Standard Chartered Bank

Gerald Huang, Chief Sales Officer, Premium Technology **Çağatay Baydar**, Executive Chairman, TEB Factoring; Chairman, FCI

Yusuf Ali Khan, Global Head for Trade Sales, Mashreq Bank

13.05-13.10

Harnessing the power of blockchain and AI

UAE Trade Connect (UTC), an e& enterprise company, is a multi-award winning platform that was built by banks for banks in the UAE. The platform offers a unique trade finance platform which harnesses the power of blockchain (DLT) technology and artificial intelligence in order to combat fraud in the banking industry. After three years of successful implementation, the platform has grown from seven founding banks to 13 banks and two fintechs. UTC is now growing to share its technology with new use cases that will address the challenges that financial institutions face every day around the world.

Zul Javaid, CEO, UAE Trade Connect

13.10-14.15 Networking lunch

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Day One: Tuesday 20 February, 2024 Morning Stream B

Select either [Stream A](#) or [Stream B](#)

Stream B

Chair: Ramia Farrage, Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

11.10-11.55

Tapping new trade flows and reshaping global supply chains

As disruptive forces reshape traditional patterns of trade, corporates are adjusting their supply chains as a means of derisking, the Middle East having previously benefitted from companies setting up distribution and logistics hubs to tap opportunities in Asia, Africa and Europe. This includes initiatives such as the 'Make it in the Emirates' programme, which seeks to attract and support global manufacturing companies to set up in the UAE, alongside the ongoing development of key infrastructure such as airports, ports and free zones.

This discussion will consider key factors in the evolution of these flows, from changes in counterparty risks and border restrictions to the significance of trade agreements (AfCFTA, RCEP, BRI, BRICS, IMEC) in strengthening high-growth corridors and offering unprecedented opportunities to enter new markets, as well as the role of banks and FIs as they look to seize the opportunity to develop platforms, products and solutions to widen access to financing and in turn promote financial inclusion. The session will also focus on increased investment from the UAE into Sub-Saharan Africa, both in the development of logistical capabilities and also in the financing of agricultural commodities, as key market stakeholders seek to unlock trade finance blockages – for smaller traders in particular – and boost trade flows between the two regions.

Moderator: Ramia Farrage, Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

Abdurrahman Naji, Chief Executive, Gulf Advanced Polymers

Mark Emmerson, Head of Global Transaction Banking, Al Masraf

Ishwar Haswani, Chief Executive Officer, E3 Energy Group

Zhann Meyer, Head, Agricultural Commodities, Nedbank CIB

Sinan Ozcan, Senior Executive Officer & Board Director, DP World Trade Finance

11.55-12.20

A ticking timebomb? Currency challenges and the impact on recoveries

Foreign exchange shortages across the wider Middle East & North African region have seen more companies across a wider range of countries deemed high risk in terms of delayed payment or non-payment, with rising interest rates and a strong US dollar having a significant impact on credit insurance claims against buyer default, resulting in increased insolvencies and a greater number of 'zombie' companies.

This session will examine the impact of this trend on regional fiscal and monetary policy, including how deteriorating currency conversion rates and the actions taken by central banks make rescheduling and restructuring more difficult to honour. The conversation will also seek to provide insights on the differentiation between working with private insurers and export credit agencies and how the process of recovery differs between the two, as well as the significance of regulatory reforms such as the UAE factoring law in relieving the pressures faced by cash-strapped businesses.

Ahmed Madkour, Middle East Claims & Recovery Director, Recovery Advisers

12.20-13.05

Staying afloat: How buoyant is the credit insurance market at present?

In the face of a heightened risk environment, this session will seek to offer a snapshot of developments in the trade credit and political risk arena, assessing how providers are responding to requests and what market capacity there currently is. Among the points for discussion:

- New clients: What due diligence is taken on new-to-market insureds and why is this important?
- Is bank client selection becoming more important for insurers? Are banks more open with information than previously?
- What has been the impact of a hardening reinsurance market when it comes to appetite and terms?

- How does working with corporate clients in the MENA region compare to working with banks? How has this evolved?
- Is more work needed on digitising the process for using insurance? How does the rate of progress compare with other markets when it comes to innovation?
- What are the most commonly held misconceptions about the trade credit and political risk insurance product?

Moderator: Laurie Flaux, Director, Political Risk & Structured Credit, Aon

Mahan Bolourchi, Managing Director, Howden Specialty DIFC Trade Credit

Rene Canezin, Managing Partner & Co-Founder, Evolution Credit Partners

Amir Hussain, Senior Underwriter, Political Risk Insurance & Trade Credit, Africa Specialty Risks

Niraj Kumar, Head of Global Transaction Banking, United Arab Bank

Hassan Omaish, Group Head of Broker Management & Partnerships, Allianz Trade

13.05-13.10

Entering the Iraqi market: Choosing the right partner

This short address will emphasise the importance of selecting the right partner when starting a business in Iraq, outlining the essential steps and considerations needed to ensure a smooth and successful entry into the Iraqi market. It will also address the topic of conducting trade business safely in Iraq, offering insights on risk management and the establishment of trustworthy partnerships, sharing practical tips for identifying the ideal partner and achieving success in the Iraqi business landscape.

Hani Idris, Regional Manager & CEO, International Development Bank UAE

13.10-14.15 Networking lunch

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Day One: Tuesday 20 February, 2024 **Afternoon Streams and Plenary**

Select either [Stream A](#) or [Stream B](#)

Stream A

Chair: [Ramia Farrage](#), Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

14.15-15.00

Payables, receivables, inventory and releasing trapped cash: Key priorities for corporates

Recent times have seen significant changes in the cash management practices of corporate treasurers. Where previously the focus was on efficiency and liquidity optimisation, the abandonment of 'just in time' in favour of 'just in case' has reversed the trend for offshoring, due to factors ranging from increased risk of supply chain disruption, volatile geopolitics, instability in the shipping sector and a troubled macroeconomic environment. Whereas before companies were looking to maximise working capital and hold limited inventory levels, now the focus is on building up reserves to mitigate risks, requiring a careful re-examination of cash management practices and the identification of pressure points for freeing up trapped cash, from renegotiating payment terms with suppliers, to re-evaluating credit policies, to leveraging technology to streamline the cash conversion cycle.

This session will consider a range of trends, from increasing emphasis on the importance of information to assess counterparties, changes in financial forecasting, auditing and the type of accounting treatment required, greater collaboration between banks and third-party providers to take operational risks, and how rising inflation and interest rates alter the approach to holding inventory.

- Moderator:** [Farrukh Siddiqui](#), Founding Partner, Emerging Capital Management Partners
Elat Niyas, Treasury Manager, Al Masaoood
Jose Payno, Managing Director & Head of GTB Corporate Product Sales, Abu Dhabi, First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB)
Toby Shore, Senior Director, Group Treasury, Risk & Insurance, Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA)
Mikael Petersen, Chief Commercial Officer, Benteler Trading International
John Goodridge, Head of Inventory Solutions, Silver Birch Finance
Rohini Kamath, Head of Commercial Banking Trade, UAE, HSBC

15.00-15.45

Developing the treasury team of the future

The role of the treasurer and their team is evolving and it's important that they have the skills to support the wider business and gain a greater voice in the future, whether data, soft skills or familiarity with technology solutions like APIs, GPT, etc. A panel of treasurers will share what they see as being the key skills required for the treasury of the future, how they are developing their team and the role of education within this.

- Moderator:** [Imen Tebourbi](#), Program Director, M.Sc. Financial Management, University of Birmingham Dubai
James Westerby-Jones, Group Treasurer, Deriv
Jason Spanos, Group Treasurer, AIR (Advanced Inhalation Rituals)
Vineet Gupta, Senior Group Treasury Manager, Al Dahra Holding

15.45-16.05 **Networking break**

Stream B

Chair: [Peter Matza](#), Council Member, Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT)

14.15-15.00

Bridging the information gap for SMEs

One frequently overlooked issue is the availability of information and data on private companies in the region, particularly relevant in the context of trade finance where SMEs are often perceived as high-risk, a perception that largely stems from the challenges faced in assessing and underwriting companies due to a lack of quality information. With many market practitioners – from credit insurers to non-banking trade finance companies – attributing their often-limited market penetration to this information scarcity, this session will highlight how the industry can improve how SMEs present themselves to service providers for fairer credit access.

- Ramaprasad Nagarajan**, Senior Vice-President, Credit & Collections, Redington Gulf
Bahaadeen Merhi, Head of Underwriting, GCC, Coface

15.00-15.45

Sanctions compliance and the wider risk landscape

Recent instances once again demonstrate the perilous nature of the present sanctions landscape, whilst a further heightening of regional tensions highlight the volatile and uncertain environment in which traders, financiers, shippers and insurers operate, with significant risks (safety, environmental, economic, reputational, financial, logistical, legal) for those who fall foul of a fast-moving compliance landscape. This session will provide an instructive guide to this most topical of subjects, including:

- The latest 'red flags' including the use of shell companies, third-party intermediaries and trans-shipment points (ship-to-ship transfers) to conceal the identity of end users

- Greater use of digital tools and increasing automation of the screening process, jurisdictional challenges when operating from a trade hub connecting into multiple territories
- Harnessing a collaborative environment for achieving a multi-directional flow of data and insights between banks, fintechs and others
- Addressing changes to trade operations within banks and non-banks including the latest regulatory requirements and greater controls
- The role of insurance and how the market is responding, as well as how a heightened sanctions environment impacts on regional credit risk and financier appetite

- Moderator:** [Peter Matza](#), Council Member, Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT)
Charles Ike, Vice-President, Maritime Trade, Pole Star
Mark Lakin, Partner, Stephenson Harwood
Rebecca Harding, Economist & Founder, Rebeccanomics
Matt Stanley, Lead Client Liaison for Insight, Kpler

15.45-16.05 **Networking break**

Afternoon plenary

Chair: [Ramia Farrage](#), Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

16.05-16.50

Can Islamic finance drive trade diversification and non-oil growth?

The evolution of Islamic finance has a key role to play in the region, as an increasing number of GCC countries implement their ambitious diversification and transformation programmes and reduce their dependence on oil, with the aim of spurring greater private sector growth and employment within new and prospective industries. Shariah-compliant finance has been identified as having a potential role to play in this, but is it being fully maximised? This final session of the day will consider this question and some of the key factors surrounding it, including:

- How has demand for Islamic finance products evolved? Are corporates able to take advantage of shariah-compliant cash and liquidity management solutions covering the entire working capital cycle?
- Supporting the export and re-export of UAE goods and services through financing, export credit and investment insurance products: How has this impacted on demand for other products such as shariah-compliant insurance?
- To what extent can Islamic finance be utilised as a tool for enhancing trade relations and promoting economic cooperation between the Middle East and thriving markets such as Africa?
- Promoting knowledge in Islamic finance best practice and providing additional manoeuvring capacity in the product offering being made available to clients
- With its risk sharing model deemed particularly suitable for SMEs, what steps are financial institutions offering Islamic finance solutions taking to better support them?

- Moderator:** [Maninder Bhandari](#), Director, Derby Group
Betül Kurtulus, Regional Director, Central, Eastern & South-Eastern Europe & the Middle East, FCI
Prathit Harish, Senior Partner, EY
Mohd Muhaznizee Bin Che Mahmud, Associate Vice-President, Wholesale & Business Banking Assets, RAKBANK

16.50-17.00

Chair's closing remarks

17.00 **Evening networking reception**

Day Two: Wednesday 21 February, 2024 Morning

08.00-09.00 Coffee and networking

09.00-09.05

Chair's morning remarks

Ramia Farrage, Senior Producer & Presenter, Forbes Middle East

09.05-09.50

Strategic commodity supply and the role of state-backed support

With the issue of food and energy security continuing to dominate the agenda for governments the world over, this has seen proactive measures taken to ensure the flow of key strategic commodities amidst a challenging macroeconomic and geopolitical environment. This has seen various traders secure lending facilities with state export finance institutions and export credit agencies in the region to meet their working capital needs and support the purchase of metals, minerals, refined hydrocarbons, wheat and other grains.

This session will examine the significance of this trend and what it says about the current state of commodity security, from traders leveraging ECAs to develop broader relationships with regional exporters to how such measures further demonstrate the effectiveness of regional economic diversification efforts and the presence of Middle East goods on the global market. The conversation will also consider the geostrategic importance of rare earth minerals as an asset class, with the rapid growth of industry sectors such as electric vehicles, robots and drones, wind turbines and other types of high-end manufacturing and defence products seeing increasing demand from businesses and governments alike.

Presentation by: **Rebecca Harding**, Economist & Founder, Rebeccanomics

Followed by discussion with:

Selima Mehiri, Head of Trade & Working Capital, APAC & Middle East, Barclays

Gianluca Elmosi, Group Treasury Director, Al Dahra Holding

Ferdinand Zaumu, Managing Director, Head of Trade & Working Capital Solutions, Middle East & Africa, Citi

Vishwanath Ananthkrishnan, Head of Trade & Commodities, Rescom

Bharat Gupta, Senior Vice-President & Head, Trade & Structured Finance, Asia, Europe, Middle East & Africa, Olam Global Agri

09.50-10.35

ESG, diversification and the transition of export credit

As industrial diversification drives significant change throughout the region, this has been mirrored in the export credit space, with the number of big hydrocarbon projects backed by ECAs already starting to dwindle in favour of supporting activities in healthcare, renewable energy, transportation and social infrastructure. Recent developments have once again highlighted the role ECAs have in coming to the fore during challenging economic times, as was the case during the 2008 global financial crisis. Reflecting on these themes, this session will consider the following:

- Examining regional trends, from the impact of economic diversification programmes to increased focus on the North African market
- Are enough 'big deals' still hitting the market? How are ECAs and banks looking to work more closely together to capitalise on inbound and outbound opportunities for their exporters?
- How do MENA corporates view the benefits of using ECA financing? How do those benefits compare to traditional commercial finance and how can it help when it comes to supply chain and procurement?

- Highlighting the ESG credentials of various activities, from carbon reduction in oil and gas projects to reducing traffic volumes in new railways to investing in new capex equipment in traditional sectors such as textiles
- What outcomes can be gleaned from COP28 when it comes to the role of trade in accelerating the clean energy transition and cutting global emissions?

Moderator: Semih Ozkan, Executive Director, EMEA Energy, Power, Renewables, Metals & Mining, J.P. Morgan

Madiha Aslam, Director, Structured Finance, Innovo Projects

Michal Ron, Chief International Officer, Sace
Farah Lahbib, Group Director, Trade Finance, Working Capital Financing & Credit Risk Management, OCP
Vomic Nur Shah, Global Head of Origination & Client Coverage, UK Export Finance

Godfred Asamoah, Trade Product Manager, Wholesale Banking, Bank ABC

10.35-11.05 Networking break

“A very important event in the schedule of any company and banker seeking to develop trade finance solutions.”

Dr A Mahate, Dubai Industries & Exports

“Great speakers and excellent for networking.”

R Shah, Stephens Harwood

“Another amazing event with good discussion and learning.”

B Gupta, Olam Agri

“Thanks to the GTR team for another superbly organised event. The relevance and content of the event has driven the record attendance. Many thanks to the panelists for the lively conversations!”

S Roy, TradeAssets

“A GTR event is an opportunity that I would not miss at any cost. Over the years it has transformed from simple networking to knowledge sharing and creating a source of ‘GO TO’ for information.”

S Desai, Humana International

Day Two: Wednesday 21 February, 2024 Afternoon

11.05-11.50

Building a sustainable roadmap for trade finance investors

The levels of funding required to meet the needs of global trade as it continues on its current trajectory – in the MENA region in particular – signal a key role for external sources of capital, and in particular the investment community, with the main challenge identified as opening the eyes of investors to the enormous potential of trade as an asset class, seen by many as integral to tackling the trade finance gap and the disproportionate impact it has on SMEs in particular.

This session will highlight the key touchpoints in the journey towards this goal, from how bringing new liquidity to the market can increase capacity for trade originators, the role technology can play in enhancing deal workflow to achieve scale, key developments in the legal space when it comes to trade financing and digital assets, as well as the need to provide a sustainable roadmap to align with the requirements of institutional investors once you are able to reach them.

Moderator: Çağatay Baydar, Executive Chairman, TEB Factoring; Chairman, FCI

Simon Penney, Head of Middle East, Gemcorp Capital
Nicolas Clavel, Chief Investment Officer, Scipion Capital

Christoph Gugelmann, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Tradeteq

Vinay Kapoor, Executive Vice-President, Triterras

“Very useful, topics and areas are taken correctly. A useful event to get in touch with new people who are all in global trade.”

V Arunachalam, Platinum Corporates

11.50-12.40

A further step towards paperless trade: The Electronic Trade Documents Act

The enactment into law of the Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA) in September 2023 was a major milestone for the global trade finance industry, allowing for the legal recognition of documents such as bills of lading and bills of exchange in electronic form, rectifying deficiencies in their treatment under English law and allowing businesses to take advantage of reduced costs and accelerated transaction timelines, subsequently increasing access to trade finance. With many parties having previously adopted a “wait and see” approach due to previous lack of comfort around legal frameworks, this session will consider the ETDA’s significance as a step towards further adoption and its potential benefits, with so many contracts and maritime rules governed by English law. Talking points will include:

- How are government initiatives and bank strategies converging when it comes to digitising the wider ecosystem and the whole transaction journey?
- Instigating a cultural change away from physical documents: Educating corporates (and SMEs in particular) to better advocate for digitisation
- Local, regional and global: How do bank strategies compare? How significant is the emergence of digital-only banks?
- To what extent are digital strategies also seen as a key means to helping banks tackle the ongoing threat of fraud?

Chris Southworth, Secretary General, ICC United Kingdom; Co-Chair, Commonwealth Legal Reform & Digitalisation Programme *in conversation with* **Vincent O’Brien**, Director, ICC United Arab Emirates (ICC UAE); Associate Director, Institute of International Banking Law & Practice (IIBLP)

Followed by group discussion with:

Huny Garg, Executive Director & Country Head, KSA & Bahrain, Swift

Jacco De Jong, Global Head of Sales, Bolero International (Part of WiseTech Global)

Joshua Kroeker, Head of Asia, Mitigram

Mritunjay Singh, Head of Transaction Banking Product Management, Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank (ADCB)

12.40-13.25

What are the next big trends in trade and supply chain innovation?

Deep tier, embedded finance, open banking, AI; just some of the trends to have got the trade finance industry excited in recent times. As a counterpoint, Contour, We.Trade, Marco Polo, Serai; all examples of fintech companies/consortia who despite being seen as great propositions struggled to gain traction and eventually ceased operating. So what’s next for 2024 and beyond? This session will investigate some of the emerging trends we are likely to hear more about over the coming months, the emerging technologies being worked on and how they have the potential to impact on trade. Points for discussion will include:

- The disintermediation of trade platforms: Does more work need to be done on the overall framework before worrying about the various channels? Is lack of sufficient capitalisation holding things back?
- Should there be greater coordination in the use and checking of trade-related data? Is the market seeing a movement toward electronic KYC and centralised repositories?
- How can digital supply chain finance be utilised to tap into the supplier base to create new opportunities and solutions, particularly when it comes to managing challenges such as FX risk?
- Is the market any closer to knowing more about the ramifications of AI for trade? How seriously are the risks around this being taken?

“GTR MENA continues to grow in importance with a record-breaking 900+ attendees this year. Exceptional networking opportunities with corporates and banks.”

M Iqbal, Standard Chartered

- To what extent is innovation and advances in technology driving new trade flows, both throughout the region and further afield?

Moderator: Sean Bowey, Head of Products, Global Trade & Receivables Finance, SAB
Abdulla Al-Taei, Chief Operating Officer, United Arab Bank

Sunil Senapati, Chief Executive Officer, XDC Trade Network

Raja Debnath, Managing Director, Veeфин Solutions

Carlos Teixeira, Global Industry Principal, Finastra

Rameez Mohamed Rafi, AVP Product Proposition, Trade Finance, RAKBANK

Ana Paula Zamorano, CEO, ReSource Partners LLC

13.25-13.30

Creating an inclusive and sustainable marketplace

This short address will provide a progress update on the latest activities of the TradeAssets online technology platform, the first marketplace of its kind supporting peer-to-peer communication to further promote interbank relations, provide customers with greater access to trade-related financing solutions, and grasp new business opportunities whilst reducing the trade finance gap.

Sumit K Roy, President & Co-Founder, TradeAssets

13.30-13.35

Chair’s closing remarks followed by prize draw

13.35-14.30 Networking lunch

Day Two: Wednesday 21 February, 2024 ITFA Seminar

ITFA Middle East Regional Committee Seminar

GTR MENA 2024 will once again conclude with a special afternoon seminar hosted by our partners from the Middle East Regional Committee of the International Trade & Forfeiting Association (ITFA).

14.30-14.35

Welcome and opening remarks

Fatenah El Danab, Head of Trade and Working Capital, Middle East, Barclays; ITFA Middle East Chairperson

14.35-14.50

The ITFA Fintech Committee's 2024 priorities: Delivering new leaders in digital trade innovation

In with its laser focus on strategic industry-wide ambitions since 2018, the ITFA Fintech Committee has grown to support a network of 70+ fintech members, delivering dozens of early adopters involving leading global financial institutions and asset managers. This update will highlight the plans for 2024, as the committee seeks to fulfil its mission to establish new tradetech market practices to create a better global trade system.

Andre Casterman, Founder & Managing Director, Casterman Advisory; ITFA Fintech lead (TFD Initiative)

14.50-15.15

ITFA global and regional committee update

This session will provide opportunities for senior representatives of the International Trade & Forfeiting Association's Middle East Regional Committee to share details on the latest industry initiatives undertaken and the progress being made in representing the interests of companies, financial institutions and intermediaries engaged in global trade, forfeiting, supply chain and receivables financing.

Moderator: Chris Hall, Executive Director, Financial Solutions, WTW; ITFA Head of Regions

Fatenah El Danab, Head of Trade and Working Capital, Middle East, Barclays; ITFA Middle East Chairperson

Amr El Haddad, Head of UAE Transaction Banking, National Bank of Kuwait; ITFA MERC Advisor

Sarah Mikhail, VP, Trade & Working Capital Product Lead, MEA, J.P. Morgan; Board Member & Ambassador of Emerging Leaders, ITFA MERC

15.15-15.55

The new era of trade finance distribution

With around 80% of global trade financed by some form of trade credit, the ability to distribute trade finance assets is key to liquidity. In this panel, we talk to experts from two banks and two non-bank trade facilitation solution providers about how the "originate-to-distribute" model has evolved; not only between banks, but also originators and investors, and how it has been shaped by regulation and technology.

Moderator: Naura Hussain, Director, Trade Asset Sales & Syndications, Africa & Middle East, Standard Chartered Bank

Andre Casterman, Founder & Managing Director, Casterman Advisory; ITFA Fintech lead (TFD Initiative)

Harry Edwards, Head of Distribution, Allianz Trade Middle East

Rasheed Hinnawi, Portfolio Management & Distribution, MENAT, HSBC Middle East

15.55-16.00

Closing remarks

Semih Ozkan, Executive Director, EMEA Energy, Power, Renewables, Metals & Mining, J.P. Morgan; ITFA MERC Advisor



“Very important opportunity to expand to new terms, knowledge and business insight and meeting experts from many business and trade sectors. Thanks GTR for organizing this!”

M Kiwan, International Chamber of Commerce Syria, ICC Syria

“I have found this to be the most useful and relevant annual trade event in the UAE that brings all key stakeholders together for a great information exchange and networking experience!”

E Uddin Ahmed, Dubai Islamic Bank

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Young Professionals Pass *(Limited free tickets available)*

To qualify, you must be under 25 years old, with less than three years of experience in the trade finance industry. 20 passes are available for this event, limited to 2 passes per institution, and cannot be combined with other promotions. Confirm your eligibility by contacting registrations@gtreview.com with your LinkedIn profile and age.

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