

Canada Arab Business Council

NEWSLETTER

Foreword



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We are delighted to welcome you to our new CABC newsletter. After a lapse of a few years, we decided to resurrect the publication to keep you better informed about business successes, business potential, policy issues and relevant news items as they relate to trade and investment between Canada and the Arab countries of the MENA region.

While 2018 has been a year of unprecedented opportunities for Canadian firms operating in the Arab World, there have also been challenges, and both have been reflected in our activities. For example, in April the CABC hosted our Annual Business Forum and Gala Dinner at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa that attracted a sold out audience of Canadian and Arab business leaders, Arab Ambassadors, and a roster of keynote speakers that included Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson, then Minister of

international Trade François-Philippe, Champagne; Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Navdeep Bains; Minister of International Development and La Francophonie Marie-Claude Bibeau; and Jean Charest, former Premier of Québec and Co-Chair of the Canada UAE Business Council. During the year, we have also hosted a number of other conferences and roundtable sessions, all designed to enhance commercial relations between Canada and the Arab World.

At the same time, in view of the current bilateral dispute between Canada and Saudi Arabia, the CABC has been coordinating discussions with business leaders operating in the Kingdom in a bid to ensure that Canada's long-standing collaboration with Saudi Arabia continues to thrive.

And, as the Newsletter goes to publication, we are working hard on developing a three-year strategic plan that will identify key milestones and other objectives moving forward.

We hope you will find this edition useful. Please let us know if you have any comments or would like to provide input for upcoming editions.



CABC NEWS

New and Improved Website

Designed to be more user friendly and informative and providing new interactive features, our new website has now been up and running since October 2018. Please feel free to access it here so that you can keep up to date on latest developments both in Canada and in the Arab World.

35th Anniversary Publication

The CABC will mark the occasion of its 35th Anniversary in 2019 by publishing and distributing a unique custom-made promotional magazine. The publication, which will showcase our and our members' and partners' projects, accomplishments and successes over the years, will be ready for distribution in early 2019. Let us know if you would like to reserve copies of the magazine, or to advertise in it.

Annual Business Forum and Gala Dinner 2019

Plans are well underway for the CABC's 2019 edition of our signature Annual Business Forum and Gala Dinner. For the

first time ever, the event will be held in Toronto. The conference will take place at the Rotman School of Management on April 16, 2019 and will be preceded by a Gala Dinner the evening of April 15, 2019. Both events will feature keynote speakers and will provide terrific business networking opportunities. Updates will be added to our website as the date draws closer.

Other Upcoming Events and Activities

In addition to our upcoming Annual Business Forum and Gala Dinner, a number of other activities are planned both in Canada and the region. These include an increased focus on Maghreb countries (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) as well as initiatives involving the GCC countries, including some related to Expo 2020, the upcoming universal exposition that will be hosted by Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. In planning for various other missions and events, we will also be extending our reach by working more closely with partners in the federal, provincial and municipal governments and with boards of trade and other business councils and, of course, with Arab Ambassadors in Canada and with government officials overseas.



MENA NEWS



Abu Dhabi named safest city in the world for second year running

Abu Dhabi has been ranked the safest city in the world for the second year, with Dubai close behind in 11th place, according to a website that collates crime statistics on the world's major cities.

Numbeo, a website for crowd-sourced global data, has placed the capital first and given the lowest crime index of more than 300 cities. "Safety is paramount when choosing a city to visit or live and work in and we are proud to be the top of the list for the second year running," said Saif Saeed Ghobash, undersecretary at the Department of Culture and Tourism –Abu Dhabi.

"Our capital's strong reputation for safety and a virtually crime-free society is a testament to the ongoing efforts to establish the Emirate as a destination of distinction with international standards of safety. And we hope that adds to all visitors and

residents of Abu Dhabi enjoying their time and making the most of our renowned Emirati hospitality."

Egypt To Build the Tallest Twisting Tower In Africa Designed By The Late Zaha Hadid

Almost a decade late since 2011 when the country first set a plan to build a huge Nile Tower, Egypt has announced construction of what would be upon completion the tallest building in Africa.

Designed by the Late British-Iraqi Architect, Zaha Hadid, who passed away in 2016, the Nile Tower is designed to twist from a thin triangular base to form a rectangular skyscraper. Moreover, it would include 70 stories with the top floors giving a fantastic view of the Giza pyramids.

Bahrain on course to implement VAT from January 1, 2019

Bahrain's parliament has approved the introduction of 5 percent value-added tax (VAT) in the Kingdom from January 1 2019.

According to the state-run Bahrain News Agency (BNA), the country's House of Representatives voted on the introduction of VAT in an extraordinary session ordered by royal decree.



The bill, which would see Bahrain join the UAE and Saudi Arabia in implementing a VAT, must also be approved by the parliament's Upper House.

BILATERAL



Canada expands air transport agreements with Egypt and the United Arab Emirates

From visiting friends and family to getting goods to market around the world, Canadians rely on a robust aviation industry with diverse international air services.

Expanding Canada's existing air transport relationships allows airlines to improve their service offerings, which means more options and convenience for passengers and businesses.

The Honourable Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport, recently announced the successful conclusion of expanded air transport agreements with Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.



The Canada-Egypt air transport agreement has been expanded to allow designated airlines to operate up to seven passenger flights per week, up from four. In addition, designated airlines now can serve any city in the other country's territory.

The expanded Canada-United Arab Emirates air transport agreement allows each government to allocate 68 per cent more capacity among its designated air carriers (i.e. the number of seats that carriers can sell). This agreement also now contains four dedicated frequencies for all-cargo flights for the first time.

The new rights under the expanded agreements are available for use by airlines immediately.

Canada lifts visa requirement on the United Arab Emirates

Following an announcement by Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Ahmed Hussen, during a meeting with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Government lifted the visa requirement for UAE citizens effective June 5, 2018.

As a result of the announcement, Emirati citizens no longer need a visa to travel to Canada for short stays (normally for up to six months) for business, to visit family and friends or for tourism.

However, Emirati citizens, similar to other visa-exempt travellers, will need an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) to fly to, or transit through a Canadian airport. The eTA allows Canadian officials to screen travellers for admissibility before they board their flight to Canada. Emiratis will be able to apply online for an eTA.

Canada and the United Arab Emirates Conclude Negotiations for a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA)

On May 25, 2018, after six rounds of negotiations, Canada and the UAE concluded the negotiations toward a foreign investment promotion and protection agreement (FIPA). Canada's objective in concluding these negotiations was to secure a comprehensive and high-quality agreement that will protect Canadian investors in the UAE. The agreement provides greater predictability and certainty for Canadian investors considering investment opportunities in the UAE and for UAE investors in Canada.

Canadian Delegation participates in first ever Big Five Construct Egypt Trade Show

A Pan-Canadian delegation of construction and related companies participated at the

first ever Big Five Construct Egypt Trade Show. The 4-day event that took place in Cairo from 18-21 September 2018 saw the participation by such firms as Prospec Specialities Inc., Kryton International Inc., Greystone Energy Systems Inc., DBO Expert and Wassertek Limited.

A look at Arab Films at TIFF 2018



The Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) drew to a close on September 16th. This year, the festival – in its 43rd edition - hosted a number of Arab films, some co-produced by Canada. Walled Unwalled, Divine Wind, Girls of the Sun and Capernaum, were some of the Arab films programmed at TIFF.

Egypt Appoints New Ambassador to Canada

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi ratified the appointment of new ambassadors to Canada, Sudan, Ethiopia and the UK as part of the annual diplomatic reshuffle by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, state news agency MENA said.



Egypt's foreign ministry spokesman Ahmed Abu Zeid was named the new ambassador to Canada.

Saudi medical students allowed to complete training in Canada

More than 1,000 Saudi medical students ordered to leave Canada because of a diplomatic row have been granted an extension that would allow them to complete their training, Ottawa confirmed on August 28 2018.

According to medical and university officials, the 1,053 students received notice of the reprieve from the Saudi education ministry.

"We are pleased that (Saudi) medical residents across the country will be able to complete their training here in Canada," Canadian foreign ministry spokeswoman Amy Mills told AFP.

UAE Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed meets Canadian Prime Minister in New York

His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, met with Prime Minister Trudeau in a bid to forge closer links between the two nations.

The talks were held during the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

CANADA

Canada's economy surges in second quarter on higher exports: StatCan

A surge in exports of energy, aircraft and pharmaceutical products helped propel Canada's economy higher in the second quarter of this year, Statistics Canada said on August 30 2018.

The economy rocketed to an annualized pace of 2.9 per cent in the period from April 1 through June 30, compared with a slightly revised annual pace of 1.4 per cent in the first three months of 2018, the agency said. Economists had expected an annualized pace of 3.0 per cent for the second quarter, according to Thomson Reuters Eikon.

CIBC senior economist Royce Mendes said the economy sped ahead in the second quarter, but noted there was little momentum headed into the third. "*The acceleration in growth is unlikely to be sustained in the second half of the year,*" he said.



Canadian woman's Nobel Prize in Physics an inspiration for young girls

Women in the sciences are celebrating news of a Canadian researcher joining the rarefied ranks of female winners of the Nobel Prize in Physics and hoping it may encourage more young women to join similar fields.

Donna Strickland, an associate professor at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, has become the first woman in 55 years and the third ever to win the Nobel Prize in Physics. Marie Curie in 1903 and Maria Goeppert Mayer in 1963 were the previous winners.

Encourage companies in your sector to join the CABC!

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