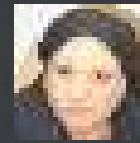




Sheikh Abdullah Kamel Apointed New ABG Chairman



JB Boda Plans for Global Growth



Mourning Dr. Azza Arfeen - IFE

# BUSINESS LIFE

July 2020



## Ziad Alexandre Hayek Citizen of the World

Lebanon between the socio-economic crisis and aspirations for a better future



9 771606 006000 07

Lebanon.....LBP5,000  
Saudi Arabia.....SR12  
Kuwait.....KD1

U.A.E.....Drhm12  
Bahrain.....BD1  
Qatar.....QR12

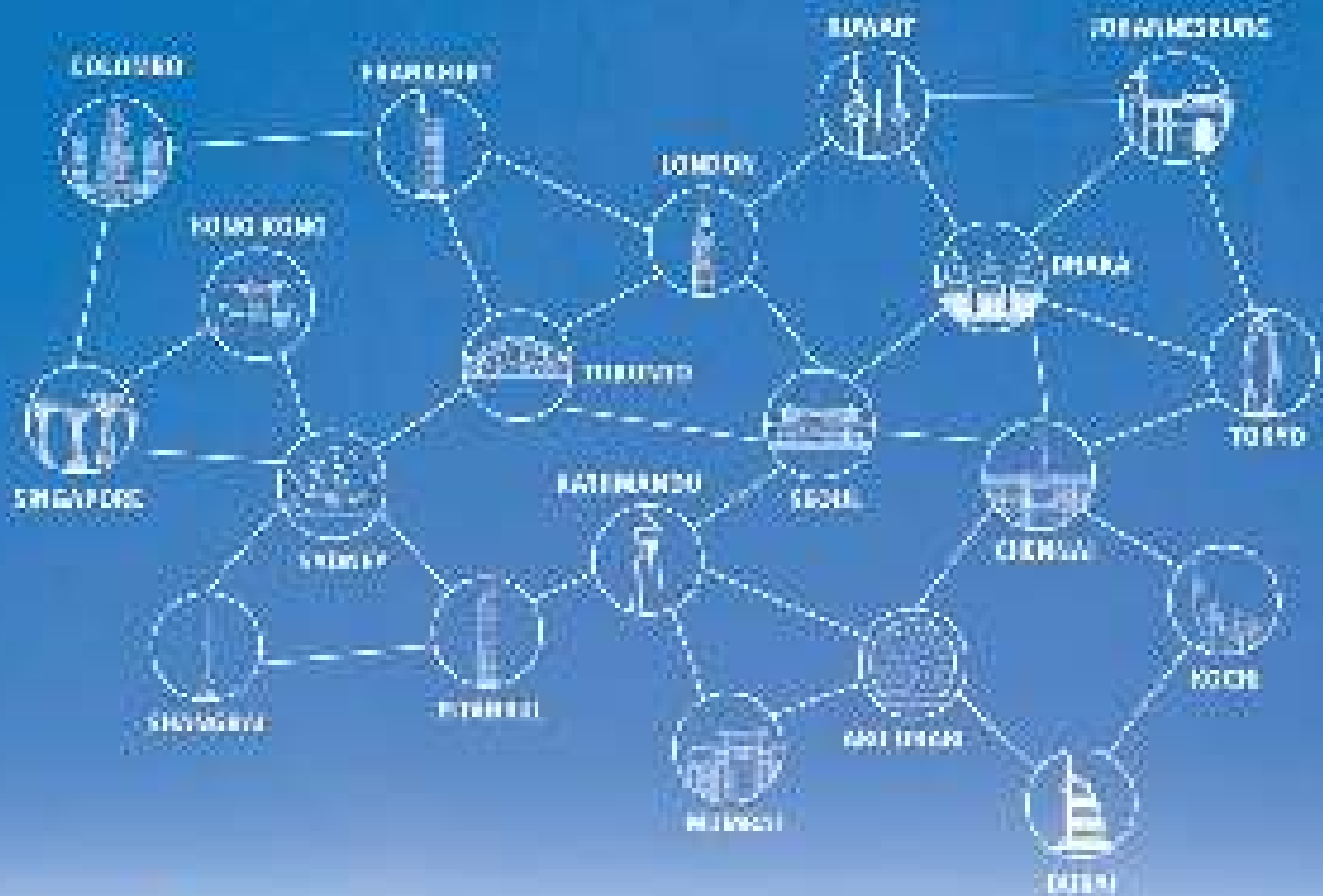
Jordan.....JD2  
Oman.....OR1  
Cyprus.....C£1

Egypt.....EP5  
Europe.....Euro4  
U.S. & Canada.....\$4

Algeria.....DZD200  
Libya.....L.D4  
Morocco.....MAD33

Tunisia.....TND4  
Yemen.....YR10  
Syria.....SYP150

# GLOBAL PRESENCE WITH A STRONG BANKING EXPERIENCE FROM QATAR TO THE GLOBE



[www.doha-bank.com](http://www.doha-bank.com)





# SAICOHEALTH DAMANA

With our one card regional solution, in-house 24-hour administration and customer service, SAICOHEALTH provides your business with a comprehensive health insurance coverage.

*Rest*  
**ASSURED**

# IC THE DEVELOPMENT



FINANCING



ICD helps private sector businesses to finance projects by providing a wide range of Sharia compliant services



ICD  
Islamic Corporation for the  
Development of the Private Sector



**COVER INTERVIEW**

11 | Ziad Alexandre Hayek  
Citizen of the World

**MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE**

22 | Assessing the Impact of the Economic and COVID-19 Crises in Lebanon

24 | Qatar Government's Initiatives Will Ensure Sustainable Development Amidst COVID-19

26 | The Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector Sign MoU with FINTERRA PTE

28 | Appointment of Abdullah Saleh Kamel as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of ABG

30 | The Global Economic Reset—Promoting a More Inclusive Recovery

36 | Oil Gains After Saudi Arabia Says it Will Cut Production Further

**QUICK NEWS**

8 | Middle East Scan

28 | Market Brief



**Interview:** Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland



**Due to a worsening economic crisis, two out of every three Lebanese households suffered from a reduced income:** Minister Hassan Hamad meets a delegation from Ministry of Health employees



**Announcing changes to Life Capital Business Unit:** Thierry Léger, Group Chief Underwriting Officer

**ENERGY**

36 | Market Rebalancing in Focus

**INSURANCE**

38 | CMA Instructs Insurance Companies to Include Coronavirus in the Insurance Cover of the Insured

40 | Robust 2019 Results to Drive Business Through 2020

42 | Bupa to Increase stake in Bupa Arabia to 43.25%

44 | Lebanese Insurers Cover COVID-19

46 | Swiss Re Appoints Thierry Léger as Group Chief Underwriting Officer

48 | Infrastructure Investment: A Key Driver of Growth in Emerging Markets Post COVID-19 crisis

**MAIN STORY**

50 | Egypt: Health Care Workers Forced to Make Impossible Choice Between 'Death or Jail'

**INFORMATION INDUSTRY**

58 | Audi Sport Customer Racing Confirms GTD WeatherTech Sprint Cup Entry

30 | News From Around The World

54 | Middle East Markets

56 | First Look on Lebanon

60 | Middle East Event Calendar

62 | What's New?



AR

MOODY'S

*Building  
Resilience*

إدارة  
Saudi Re 

## EDITORIAL

# OPEC Cuts Lead to Oil Prices Jump

With COVID-19 restrictions being lifted off globally, increasing demand together with production cuts are causing oil prices to soar



**OPEC:** New headquarters since 2009, Vienna Austria

**Publisher and Editor in Chief**

Afaf Issa

**Responsible Manager**

Afaf Issa

**Contributors**

Mona Sahli  
Marwan Hakim

**Photographer**

Raji K.

**To put your ads contact us at:**

Tel / Fax: (961-1) 370074  
e-mail: info@businesslife.net

**To subscribe contact us at:**

Tel / Fax: (961-1) 370074  
Email:  
subscribe@businesslife.net

**For your opinions e-mail:**

info@businesslife.net

**On the web:** www.businesslife.net

**T**he world is cautiously returning to normal with COVID-19 related lockdowns being lifted.

The shops and restaurants have reopened and air travel is will soon pick up as well. People are driving their cars again and using public transport. Steadily, the demand for oil is picking up after months of decline. The timing of OPEC's announced successful cuts in production is ideal and the market is reacting. The price of WTI crude has reached US\$ 40 /barrel on the 19th of June and is on an upward trend.

The stock market crash began on the 20th of February and tanked on the 23rd of March. That's the day the US federal reserve announced "extensive new measures to support the economy". Since then the market has been rallying and the top performing stocks have already fully recovered as evidenced by the S&P 500. Interestingly, the stock market has recovered before the economy and that is common since the stock market is a forward looking instrument. Everyone has been betting on the economy recovering since the end of March and we are just

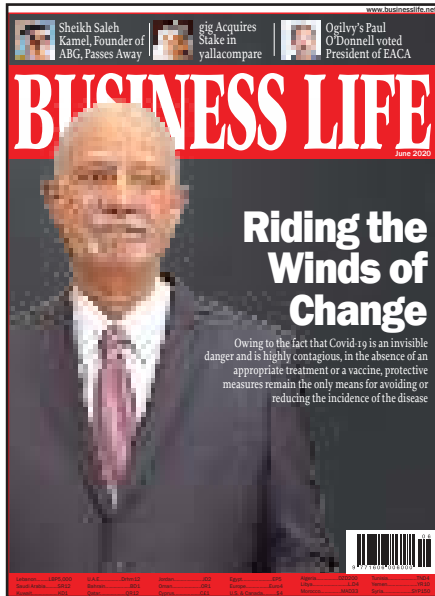
now, more than three months later, starting to see positive signs of an economic recovery.

Rising oil prices have also given a boost to Middle East stocks and if that's an indicator of what's to come then the region is well on its way to recovery. According to a JPMorgan Chase report the market could be on a so-called "supercycle" that could send oil prices to US\$ 190 / barrel by 2025, breaking the record witnessed in July 2008 when the price per barrel reached US\$ 147.27. Even though such high oil prices sound unbelievable at this present moment, the economy does behave in a cyclical fashion and increased demand for oil will drive prices higher. It is only a matter of time.

*Afaf Issa (Malak Issa)*  
Editor in Chief,



Please recycle this magazine



**Last issue's main story:**  
**The Impact of COVID-19 on Ad Investment: Brands Cut \$50 Billion from Global Adspend in Wake of COVID-19**

Oil and gas markets are trapped by oversupply and falling prices, and a global pandemic. It is high time to change the needs of the energy climate. The good news is that the signs are pointing to more investment in re-

newables, specifically offshore wind power. It's a business decision that is also addressing climate change. A new report by Wood MacKenzie says that \$211 billion will get invested in offshore wind over the next five years — something that is well-suited for oil and gas companies.

Maria Morkos  
 Beirut, Lebanon

Thomson Reuters Foundation) stated that in the past four years, the United Arab Emirates has grown a small but rising share of its own organic tomatoes, aiming to shore up food security in an import-dependent desert country.

The effort - part of a broader push to produce more home-grown food amid fears climate change could trigger instability in the global food trade - started after the country was hit by food export bans during the 2008-2009 financial crisis.

Today, the move to build up food resilience is paying off early in the face of another crisis: the coronavirus pandemic.

When the United Arab Emirates (UAE) went into lockdown in April to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, residents had the same reaction as millions of others around the world - they started panic-buying.

This story is true in most countries of

the world and especially Lebanon because in most of the Arab region and the world the instinct to stock up made sense in countries where more of its food is imported.

With lockdowns to slow the spread of COVID-19 closing borders and stalling transportation networks around the world, people in import-dependent cities are turning to urban farming as they realize how easily their food supplies can be disrupted.

As inflation and unemployment soar in Lebanon where food accounts for nearly a fifth of total imports, according to data from the World Bank — the movement to promote home-based farming has been gaining popularity.

Zuhair Helou-Dubai, UAE

## LETTERS

Please send your e-mails to:  
[info@businesslife.net](mailto:info@businesslife.net)  
 Please include your name, address, and phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

## PAUSE

To include an image in the 'Pause' section, send an e-mail to:  
[info@businesslife.net](mailto:info@businesslife.net) and ask for more information. If your image is chosen, you will be awarded US\$50, and a one year subscription.

## PAUSE

*Conference for Ministry of Information at the Grand Serail*







**NASCO RE**  
REINSURANCE BROKERS

**THE STRENGTH TO ADAPT**

**A division of the Nasco Insurance Group**  
Lebanon . France . UAE . KSA . Qatar . Egypt .  
Turkey . South Africa . Nigeria . Tunisia . Iraq

# MIDDLE EAST SCAN

## Algeria

Two main figures of Algeria's "Hirak" protest movement will soon be freed at the president's initiative, the leader of an opposition party said lately.

"President Abdelmadjid Tebboune assured me that he would use his constitutional prerogative to ensure that Karim Tabbou and Samir Benlarbi regain their freedom," Sosiane Djilali told AFP.

"It's solemn commitment on his part," said the Jil Jadid party leader after a meeting with Tebboune that he had requested to discuss the two cases. "Tebboune pointed out that he will not interfere directly in what concerns the judiciary," Djilali said.

In the Algerian judicial system, the president has the right to pardon prisoners. In principle, that right applies only to those whose convictions are final, such as Tabbou, a veteran opposition figure serving a one-year term for an "attack on the integrity of national territory".

As for Benlarbi, he has been held in preventive detention since March 7. "I think they have paid enough," Djilali said.--AFP

## Bahrain

Bahrain's Education Minister Dr. Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi has affirmed that the health and safety of students as well as the administrative, educational and technical staff are top priority.

He stressed that the Ministry of Education will spare no effort in protecting them while ensuring continuity of the educational process in public and private schools as well as higher educational establishments and kindergartens.

The minister pointed out that the administrative, educational and technical staff will return in the next academic year on September 6, 2020 while students will return on September 16, 2020.

## Egypt

Egypt's Al-Azhar said lately that it supports the Egyptian leadership's stance on the Libyan crisis, hailing the country's "enduring keenness" on a peaceful solution to the crisis.

Al-Azhar said that it seconds the Egyptian leadership in all measures it will take

to maintain the country's national security and protect its borders. It added that it supports Egypt's keenness on a peaceful solution and President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi's call for a ceasefire in all Libyan territory and resumption of negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations.

## Iran

Iranian scientist Sirous Asgari has arrived back in Iran after being released from prison by its arch-foe the United States, Iranian media reported lately.

The Tasnim, ISNA and Mehr news agencies all carried the same photograph on their Telegram accounts of Asgari, wearing a face mask against the coronavirus, being reunited with his family.

A US court had in November cleared Asgari of charges of stealing trade secrets in 2016 while he was on an academic visit to Ohio from Tehran's Sharif University of Technology. The 59-year-old told British newspaper The Guardian in March that the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency was holding him at a Louisiana detention centre without basic sanitation and refusing to let him

return to Iran despite his exoneration. Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi denied that Asgari's release was part of a prisoner exchange and said "he was freed after being exonerated", adding that his return was delayed because he was infected with COVID-19.

"Asgari was stranded in America for a while because of (being infected with) the coronavirus and the situation with flights," he said.

The State Department has yet to respond to an AFP request to comment on his release. However Ken Cuccinelli, the acting deputy secretary of US homeland security, said on Twitter that the US had been "trying to deport" Asgari since last year but that it had been "stalled every step of the way by the Iranian government".--AFP

## Iraq

Three Katyusha rockets landed near Baghdad International Airport lately, the Iraqi military said. The military said it found rocket launchers with several rockets in a rural area in western Baghdad, and there were no reports of damage or casualties.





sale of 84 interceptor missiles called the Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC-3) Missile Segment Enhancements and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$800 million.

## Lebanon

A second meeting for the ministerial crisis cell charged with following up on financial affairs was held at the Ministry of Finance, headed by Minister Ghazi Wazni, in the presence of Minister of Economy Raoul Naamah, Minister of Information Manal Abdel Samad, Governor of the Central Bank Riad Salameh, General Security Chief Abbas Ibrahim, President of the Association of Banks Salim Sfeir, and vice president of the money changers syndicate Mahmoud Halawi. The recent financial and monetary developments were evaluated, along with an assessment of the proposals for importing basic foodstuffs, and the need to ease the pressure on dollar demand from money changers.

## Libya

Landmine blasts killed at least seven people including civilians and wounded 10 others on the edges of Libya's capital, the unity government's health ministry said. "Seven people (four civilians and three mine-clearing experts) were killed in landmine explosions in several locations in the south of Tripoli, and 10 others were wounded," ministry spokesman Amin al-Hashemi told AFP.

## Morocco

Former Prime Minister Saad Hariri sent a message to King Mohammed VI of Morocco congratulating him on the success of the operation he underwent and wishing him a speedy recovery in order to lead the Kingdom to further development and prosperity.

## Oman

The Supreme Committee tasked with tackling developments resulting from coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic held a meeting under the chairmanship of Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al-Busaidi, Minister of Interior. The Committee decided to open a new set of commercial and industrial activities with effect from Wednesday, the 24th of June 2020.

## Qatar

A Qatar Airways plane evacuated hundreds of Filipino workers from Lebanon to their country lately, in wake of the dire economic and financial conditions that the Lebanese families are going through, NNA correspondent at Beirut Airport reported.

## Saudi Arabia

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, received phone call from President of France Republic Emmanuel Macron. During the phone call, they discussed the relations between the two countries as well as regional and international developments and a number of issues of common concern were discussed.

## Tunis

The United States is looking to use one of its Security Force Assistance Brigades in Tunisia, the United States Africa Command said, amid concern over Russian activity in Libya.

"As Russia continues to fan the flames of the Libyan conflict, regional security in North Africa is a heightened concern," it said in a statement. — Reuters

## United Arab Emirates

The Danish State Security Service in Dubai arrested Amir Faten Makki, who is considered one of the most dangerous international gang leaders organized on Wednesday, June 3. A State Security Agency official said that the people of the country who watched for its security and safety did not and would not allow any criminal elements, regardless of their gravity or the degree of mastery in disguise, to escape from the grip of law and the Emirates continues to strengthen the close cooperative relations that bring them together with various security services around the world.

## Yemen

Vice-President of the Republic of Yemen, General Ali Mohsen Saleh, described the invitation and the organization by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in partnership with the United Nations of the Yemen High-Level Pledging Event 2020 virtually as a major humanitarian gesture, and considered it as an extension of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's positions towards Yemen, which is experiencing the worst humanitarian crisis ever caused by the Iranian-backed Houthi militia. In a press statement on this occasion, he expressed appreciation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's efforts in organizing this conference and said that the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia always help Yemen and stand beside its people noting that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the largest supporters and financiers of the humanitarian response plans in his country, along with its support to face the consequences of the outbreak of Covid-19.

## Jordan

Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Ayman Safadi, discussed with his Egyptian counterpart, Sameh Shoukry, the regional developments and mechanisms to address them to serve Arab issues and achieve regional security and stability.

In a phone call he made with Shoukry, the discussions aimed to maintain joint consultation and coordination on ways to increase cooperation on diverse positions. Discussing developments related to the Palestinian issue, the two ministers affirmed their "firm" position in rejecting Israel's annexation of Palestinian lands in violation of international law, a step that would undermine the chances of achieving a just peace.

## Kuwait

The U.S. State Department has approved a possible \$1.425 billion sale of Patriot air and missile defense system components and upgrades to Kuwait, the Pentagon said after notifying Congress of the certification. The Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency said the State Department had approved the



# Tunis Re

...your risk is our business

TUNIS RE is rated B+ (Good) A.M. Best Co.



Société Tunisienne de Réassurance S.A. (S.A. Tunisie) BP 104 1065 Montfleury  
Tunis Phone: (216) 71904 911 Fax: (216) 71904 930 / 71905 173  
E-Mail: [info@tunisre.com.tn](mailto:info@tunisre.com.tn) WebSite: [www.tunisre.com.tn](http://www.tunisre.com.tn)

# Ziad Alexandre Hayek Citizen of the World

## Lebanon between the socio-economic crisis and aspirations for a better future

**Z**iad Hayek is a visionary leader in business and finance who has mastered the new language of wisdom, love and courage while advancing positive initiatives in responsible leadership and corporate social responsibility.

Perfect stability of the business environment is not possible and thus the business leader's challenge is to anticipate change.

Lebanon's economy is now in a situation of a sudden stop. Sudden stops are usually followed by a sharp decrease in output, private spending and credit to the private sector, and real exchange rate depreciation.

The import/export imbalance is creating current account deficits of around 25% of GDP. Lebanon macroeconomic fundamentals are the worst among previous crises-stricken countries. It is the third most indebted country in the world, after Japan and Greece, with a Debt-to-Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio in 2018 of 150% and currently at 156% according to the International Monetary Fund and a gross public debt of US\$ 87 billion. The banking system is completely paralyzed. The banks are no longer able to serve their clients as they relied mostly on the deposits of wealthy Lebanese and especially the diaspora, but this has also stopped. Instead of helping the country get out of this financial mess, the banks are stuck right in the middle of this crisis instead of offering solutions. The consequences of these crises, for Lebanon and all stakeholders involved may be devastating unless urgent policy action decisions are taken, and structural reforms are implemented.

To stop this downfall, the economy will need an immediate injection of at least \$25 billion in fresh capital. It is critical that Lebanon begins a process of significant fiscal and monetary adjustments and structural reforms to contain public debt and raise economic growth.

Noting the above, it is important to know that Ziad Hayek was the former Secretary General of the Republic of Lebanon's High Council for Privatiza-



**Interview:** Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland



**Advancing positive initiatives:** *Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland*

tion and PPP from 2006 until he was nominated to be President of the World Bank in February 2019. He is offering Lebanon an important solution to enhance economic and legal reforms that kick-off the cycle of the stagnant economy.

The Lebanese Government withdrew Hayek's nomination in March 2019. Prime Minister Saad Hariri reported to Lebanon's Council of Ministers that he withdrew Hayek's nomination due to external pressure. Hayek continues to be Vice Chair of the Bureau of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Head of the International Center of Excellence in PPP for Ports and President of the World Association of PPP Units & Professionals.

Before moving back to Lebanon in June 2006, Hayek was CEO of Lonbridge Associates Ltd., Senior Managing Director of Bear Stearns, President of Banque Indosuez Mexico, S.A.; Vice President at Salomon Brothers in charge of investment banking for northern Latin America (New York); and Vice President of Citibank, NA (New York).

Back at Citibank's head office in New York in 1988, Hayek devised complex structured finance transactions, leading eventually to debt-for-equity swap in Venezuela and the restructuring and repackaging of the debt of several Latin American countries. Hayek was later promoted to head the International Securitization Department, which developed the securitization of future receivables transactions from credit cards,

telecommunications, airline ticket sales, and mineral and oil exports.

Hayek joined Salomon Brothers Inc. in 1992 and while working under Thomas Enders, they established relations with the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa before the fall of the Apartheid regime. He then played a major role in the re-entry of the country in the international capital markets with the First South African Equity Fund and other initiatives. He also managed the Firm's relationship with clients in Mexico, Algeria and Russia.

In 1994, Hayek re-joined his Citibank team as Managing Director and Partner in Indosuez Capital Latin America, the partnership they established with Banque Indosuez, Paris. After being named President of Indosuez Mexico, S.A. de C.V. he moved to Mexico and headed the Bank's corporate finance activities and its equity, fixed income, futures and options trading business. He oversaw the Partnership's operations in northern Latin America, advised the Mexican Government on the peso crisis<sup>[14]</sup> and contributed to the return of Mexican companies to the commercial paper market.

Hayek took the position of Senior Managing Director at Bear Stearns in New York in 1997 and supervised the Firm's emerging markets' telecom investment banking business. Aside from managing a large number of bond issues, Hayek led the then-largest IPO for a tech company on the New York Stock Exchange for Prodigy Communications Inc. He followed that with a number of M&A transactions for the Grupo Carso subsidiary and for Spain's Telefónica, S.A. The Firm asked Hayek then to move to London to establish its European investment banking business. There he handled a large number of corporate finance deals, including the bidding for UMTS licenses in Europe for Telefónica, totaling more than US\$15 billion. In 2003, Hayek and a group of his Bear Stearns colleagues established Lonbridge Associates Ltd., a boutique investment banking firm specializing in the then-exploding fields of telecom technology and renewable energy. The firm in which Hayek was CEO, split into two entities in 2006 following Hayek's departure to join the Lebanese Government under Prime Minister Siniora.

On 1 June 2006, the Council of Ministers of Lebanon appointed Hayek to the quasi ministerial-level position of Secretary General of the HCP. As such, he reported to the Prime Minister and was responsible of managing operations of the Council, which is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Economy, the Minister of Labor and the Minister of Justice.

In the following exclusive interview



**Promoting economic growth:** *Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland and his spouse*

with Ziad Hayek, BUSINESS LIFE explores the structural factors that have limited the scope of Lebanon's economy, the available solutions and opportunities to save the Lebanese banking sector, the Lebanese currency, the current Lebanese situation and the Unprecedented decline in oil prices around the globe.

**BL:** Ziad Hayek, how do you summarize your milestones and achievements?

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Well, I wouldn't call them achievements. I don't think about what I have done as achievements, I think they are just a normal succession of events in life and much of what we do depends on circumstance, it depends on where we are, who we talk to, how we live our lives. So, I really don't think that one should consider what one does as an achievement, anything we do is dependent on many factors and many other people that come along the way. The milestones of my life are that I emigrated with my family when I was 17 years old from Lebanon on a refugees' boat to Cyprus where they kicked us out. Thus, we went to Greece, then we went to France and again they wanted us out. We secured

a visa to Mexico and so we went to Mexico. I studied there and eventually continued my education in the US at the University of Houston and later the University of Texas at Dallas. I joined Citibank and they sent me to work in Bahrain, then I was sent to Africa where I worked also for the same bank.

I became a regional treasurer for Citibank, West Africa. I then left for an interim period to work for the Reagan Administration and something called the Enterprise Program for two years. There I worked in Nepal, Egypt, Morocco and various countries of Latin America. I was also liaison for development affairs with the Arab League, then based in Tunis. In 1988 I rejoined Citibank in New York responsible for Structured Finance. I became head of the International Securitization department. And after that, I was recruited by Salomon Brothers and from there, joined Banque Indosuez. I advised the Mexican Government on how to get out of the peso crisis that they had and this is why these days I am trying to help our government with the problem of the Lebanese Lira crisis.

Later, I joined Bear Stearns and then with colleagues from Bear Stearns, I set up

an investment banking boutique called Lonbridge Associates Ltd. It specialized in telecom technology and in renewable energy.

In 2006, I was appointed Secretary-General of the High Council for Privatization. I lobbied for the passage of the public-private partnership (PPP) law. At that time everybody was against PPP and by the time I left government all the political parties, everybody, was in favor of PPP. It was long but very satisfying campaign. I spoke about PPP everywhere: Conferences, seminars, universities, social clubs, social gatherings. I didn't give up and after 10 years of lobbying, my efforts were crowned with the passage of the PPP Law in Parliament in September 2017. Eighteen months later, I resigned from the government because the corrupt politicians in Government did not want to apply the PPP Law and were (and still are to this day) actively trying to circumvent it.

**BL:** it is said that you left the government because you were under pressure, is it true?

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I was not under pressure. What happened was that I was against the way that the government of Prime Minister Hariri was dealing with the power



**Business responsibility towards government is its alignment with government priorities:** *Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland*

sector reform (especially the PPP part of it). I left in March 2019, I was against the various governments' policies for dealing with the private sector and with economic development from 2009 and onwards. I was hoping that things would be different, every time there was a change of government. I was hoping that things will change but things didn't change. The same people controlled that ministry and the all the prime ministers wanted to be accommodating and so the reforms that I wanted to implement were never implemented.

For me applying the PPP Law was the right way to deal with the energy crisis. The Government did not want to apply the PPP law so that was one reason for me to resign. The other reason for me to resign was that I was a candidate for the presidency of the World Bank. I was winning that because all the countries in the world that were op-

posed to President Trump were supporting me. I had the support of all Latin America except Brazil, I had the support of all of Africa, all of Europe except the UK the Baltic States and Ukraine. I had the support of all of Asia including Russia, China, and India, except for Japan and Korea. And so, I was winning that race where it was a two-way race. And when the American government saw that I would win, they pressured Prime Minister Hariri to withdraw my candidacy and when that happened, of course, their candidate won by default. So, when that happened, of course, I had a second reason for resigning. If my government was not willing to apply the law, and my government was abetting corrupt practices, and on top of that, my government was willing to withdraw my candidacy for the presidency of the World Bank when I was winning, then there's something very wrong with that

government and that was not a government which I wanted to continue to be with, so that's why I resigned.

**BL: What do you think of President Trump's overall decisions?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** It is sad for America to have a president like President Trump. It is sad for America and for the world to have an incompetent president. Someone who is full of himself and unable to work with others. A president with no empathy. A president who is the president of only part of population of the United States and not president for all Americans. Very sad.

**BL: What are the updates on your latest plans in the Middle East especially in Lebanon and the globe? What's your vision for the next five coming years?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** My concern has been about infrastructure because there is a huge deficit of infrastructure everywhere. There is a need to build a lot more but there is not enough money in the world and governments have been running very high deficits and very high national debts everywhere. Not only in Lebanon, everywhere. So, governments didn't have enough money to fund those infrastructure projects and the World Bank estimated that there's going to be a 30 trillion-dollar deficit in financing infrastructure projects that the private sector had to provide. So, my concern was how is the private sector going to be involved in building infrastructure in the world at the time when most governments around the world ignored proper PPP procedures and practiced corruption. Many government officials are not even aware of what are the best practices for PPP. But after the pandemic, all of this obviously has changed. Of course, we still need infrastructure. We still need the private sector to build infrastructure projects. We need the private sector today even more than we did before because governments have had to deal with the consequence of the crisis. The problem is that the private sector also had to deal with the consequence of the crisis. So, there is no money in the world.

There is no money, GDP in every country in the world has gone down into negative territory, so the governments are printing money to be able to keep the economy going, they're printing money to pay people's salaries and they're printing money to help people that are going hungry. Printing a lot of money will devalue the trust in currencies. Eventually, we need to be looking for new currencies and this is what I'm interested in, new cyber currencies that are going to be better stores of value than fiat currency issued by governments.



**BL: What are the disadvantages of Cryptocurrency?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Of course, this is an exciting field though it is not a field that's mature. There's a lot of cyber currencies that are being promoted and then they don't work either because of technical problems or because theirs are illiquid and shallow markets. Yet I think that this approach is here to stay. Eventually, the entire world will have one cyber currency.

**BL: Currently, there are several cyber currencies, what is your view?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Yes, now there are many cyber currencies but the world is a small village and so many of the problems we're facing today pre-date the pandemic. With globalization being boosted by technology, we became a small village too quickly. In the old days, people would travel from one part of the world to another part and they would settle there. That person that would come into a town eventually becomes acclimated and accepted by the town and becomes part of its people. Lately, what happened in the past 20 years is the world has shrunk very fast all of a sudden. Today, with the ubiquity of social media, somebody in Africa could be sitting in my living room, and I could be sitting in the living room of somebody in China or in the US. Bringing all these cultures very quickly together did not give us time to acclimate and everybody became worried about their identity. So, the French are worried about their French identity with North Africans in France; the Americans are worried about their identity with so many Hispanics; the Italians are worried about their identity with so many African boat refugees; and the Muslims around the world are worried about their identity from a globalizing western civilization. Consequently, when people from Japan to China to India to Europe, Africa, North America, and Latin America are going in one direction and the Muslim world is going in another direction, there develops inevitably a crisis of identity and fear. This, in turn, has engendered many crises: from Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines to Boko Haram in Nigeria to ISIS in our region. All of these are crises of identity. Russia has a crisis of identity. Russians see themselves as an Orthodox culture, as do many people in Serbia (where anti-Bosnian sentiments first erupted), in Cyprus, Greece, and elsewhere. So, the world has been going through a crisis of identity, everybody is. Everybody has been worried about how their culture is going to be affected. In addition, there was an economic crisis of globalization because jobs were going to countries where salaries were lower. Now, with the pandemic, we are learning that we may not like our culture to

change, but we are a small world and somebody that catches the flu in Wuhan is going to affect people living in Tierra del Fuego in Argentina, or Chili. We live in a small world. We have to deal with it as a small world. We have to deal with climate change, we have to deal with pandemics, we have to deal with issues of identity.

**BL: Will the culture change?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** The culture will change, we cannot stop culture from changing whether we like it or not. Within a hundred years, we're all going to be speaking mostly one language addressing the same issues, eating the same kinds of food. Already, you can travel the world and you can eat at McDonald's everywhere in the world. Everybody is going to wear the same kind of clothing. Our buildings are the same everywhere around the world. So, we have to stop thinking of ourselves at a very local level. And the pandemic is driving that, it's reminding us that we are a small world. I disagree with people saying that this is driving nations to clamp up and there's going to be less globalization. I think this is very temporary. I think the pandemic is going to drive us to a more globalized world. So of course, we're going to have one currency and of course eventually we're going to have one language because we need to communicate. Already, English is the international language. So, if the Lebanese people are smart enough, this is a big "IF" because until now we have not shown it, we would be the leaders of that future and the leaders of globalization. We are the most cosmopolitan society on Earth. This is a society where people speak many languages, every family has somebody, in Latin America, Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and everybody is connected. We are so connected to the world, and this is our strength; and if we know how to it play right, we can be the leaders of globalization. Unfortunately, until now, we are so stuck in our old fears of sectarian identity. We don't know how to manage our government, we don't know how to manage our society.

**BL: Currently, what are you doing?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Well, Gérard Charvet, a friend of mine and I have come up with a plan to resolve Lebanon current financial crisis. We are trying to talk to everybody that would listen to tell them "look we have experience in dealing with Latin America crisis. I have had the government restructure, the debts of Honduras of Trinidad Tobago and Venezuela and I was adviser to the Mexican government when they had the Peso crisis and so we're saying we have that experience. We know what needs to be done and unfortunately what is being done

today is the wrong thing. So, we are talking to the advisors of the Prime Minister and the advisors of the of the Minister of Finance. We know people in the IMF where we're trying to tell them "this is the better recipe."

**BL: What are your comments on Lebanon defaulting on \$1.2 billion in foreign currency debts? What about the haircut?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** They're saying the government cannot pay. They cannot pay the banks, who are the bond holders, and so the banks cannot pay to the depositors. What they are currently talking about is something called the haircut on the debts and on the deposits, which means I owe you \$100 but I'm only going to pay you \$50. Well, yes, this solves the problem of the Government and of the banks immediately but it does not solve the problem of the depositors, because at the end of the day they are the ones who are left holding the loss. They lose their money, Not only that, but this process damages big time every investor's confidence in Lebanon, and there's no way we are going to be able to grow our economy when investors, who create jobs, no longer trust the country. The current thinking, spread and promoted by the political parties, is that the bank shareholders are at fault so let them lose their equity and we will compensate depositors by giving them equity in the banks. It is called "the bail in". So the big depositors become the bank owners but that doesn't solve anything, because yes, the shareholders go home, the big depositors become the owners of the banks – but these are bankrupt banks, they have no money. So Mr./Mrs. Big depositor, you are the new owner of a bankrupted bank. Even though you are the shareholder of it you cannot make loans, you cannot operate it because you don't have capital. You have nothing.

And there's no trust in anything, so people will hoard money at home. When money is not circulating in the banking system, there is no credit multiplier effect, which is what pumps money into the economy.

Our plan is different. Our plan says "No, the Government owes money, the Government has to pay the banks and the banks have to pay the depositors."

**BL: How?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** With time, you need to give everything time and you need to use the assets of the State, the State has a lot of assets and it cannot say I cannot pay when it has the assets, it has to use the assets it has.

**BL: Does it mean that the Government has to sell some of its assets?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Yes, the Government should sell some of its assets but now it is not

the time for selling in this current market and it is not the time for privatization. What it can do, is it can put these assets in trust for the benefit of the banks. The trustee can be a trustworthy entity that can take care of these assets. The banks are the beneficiaries of these assets, so immediately, the banks don't suffer a loss on their balance sheets. They exchange 1 dollar of Government debt for 1 dollar of trust certificates, so their balance sheets are fine, no one loses all their equity. The banks are still functional, they may not have liquidity, but the central bank can get liquidity from the IMF and from the gold reserves that it has, by borrowing against them, and it can inject that liquidity in the banking system so it works again. The depositors' money is still at the bank. They cannot withdraw it, but we can give it liquidity by converting it to CDs (certificates of deposit). These can be long-term CDs, for 5 years and 10 years, and so now people know that they have a bank CD and that CD is in their hand and they can sell it to somebody else. They can trade it. So the money stays at the bank but the people can sell the CDs and get cash. And as these CDs are tradable, they'll become the new nucleus of our capital markets. Today, our capital market is the Beirut Stock Exchange which has the shares of Solidere and 3 banks or something like this. It is a very small stock exchange. Now, if we were to put 75 billion dollars' worth of new financial instruments (i.e. CDs, convertible bonds, preferred shares) to trade, then our capital market becomes big. We create depth, volume and liquidity for it. Investment can come back, depositors can get money from their CDs and the banks can keep the money for 10 years until they can sell the assets of the State and be able to repay the CDs. So, nobody loses, everybody wins. Some people want the banks to lose the money, some people are against the Government. Everybody is out there to take revenge on somebody, but this is the wrong attitude, we should not be taking revenge on each other, the situation we are in is everybody's fault; it is not only the fault of the banks, it is not only the fault of the Central Bank. It is also the fault of the Government that was responsible. The Government was supposed to be overseeing this. Our Parliament was supposed to be overseeing the activities of the Central Bank. They didn't. Our Government was supposed to oversee the activities of the Central Bank but they didn't either. Every ministerial statement they had issued said: "We are going to preserve the value of the Lebanese Lira." Every successive Government had this as their policy, so they are also responsible. People are responsible because people are the ones who elected these politicians, and they

never held them accountable for anything. We have the most irresponsible political class in the world. Our politicians can do anything they want and their followers shout "hail the leader". We can never hold them accountable for anything. Even when we had elections last time and we knew that the country was in a bad shape, we still elected the same politicians. So people cannot say it's not my fault. Yes maybe the little depositors did not know what risk they were taking when putting their money in the bank, but the small depositors knew that they were electing somebody that they should not elect. I'm not trying to blame the people alone, I'm just saying that we are all to blame. Accordingly, today is not the time to blame others. We are on a ship and the ship is sinking. We can blame the captain but now is not the time to vote in another captain. We need to close the hole because the water is coming in. Some people say we need new regulations and reforms. I say today is not the time to agree new regulations on the ship, today is the time to close the hole in the ship, and then we can do the reforms. Today is the time for the financial rescue plan and once we've rescued the country financially, we can do institutional reform, we can find the stolen money, we can fix the judicial system, we can do this, we can do that, and we should.

**BL: How can you rescue the country while keeping the current leaders who already made catastrophes in the treasury of Lebanon?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Well, rescuing the country is a technical matter. Today, rescuing the country is about our financial decisions. If we had a dictator, our plan can be done in 24 hours time, and then we can go after all the politicians and do all of the things we want; but because we don't have a dictator and we have to go through Parliament, we're saying it may take several months. If they really want to do it, it will take no more than a few months. Within less than 6 months we can finish with everything and people can have their money again, people can have their jobs, people can go to work. And then people can demonstrate and bring down the Government if they so choose. But today, you go to a demonstration and this means you're not eating tonight, because you didn't work.

Today, you go to a demonstration and you wait for somebody to bring back the stolen money, and your kid is not going to school, it doesn't help. I'll give you an example, we are like somebody who decided to get a business manager to manage our business – like we, the Lebanese people got the politicians to manage our affairs. Then after a while, this person finds out that the

business manager has mis-managed or stolen his money. He also finds out that he owes the bank money and he owes the school his kids' tuition. The bank has stopped the service of the credit card machine in his store and is refusing to open a letter of credit for him to import merchandise. The school has asked his kids to go home. He has no money, so what should he do? Should he close down his business and take his children out of school? Of course not. Should his first priority be to sue the business manager to get his money back? Of course not, that will come later. His priority should be to use a land he owns to settle his loan with the bank and hock his wife's jewelry to pay the tuition fee. Once this crisis is dealt with, he can now rebuild his business and sue the business manager. What the Government needs to do now is to use its assets to settle its debt to the banks and borrow against the gold reserves it has, which are after all meant to be just that: reserves for a rainy day. There will then be time enough to do reforms and to seek the return of the stolen funds. So, this is what we need to do.

**BL: You mentioned about the CDs solution, but don't you think that the Lebanese people want their money in cash immediately?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** There's no money now.

**BL: Therefore, there's a problem. People need cash but CDs won't give them an immediate cash solution, what are your comments?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** With our plan, 40% of all funds across the board can be released to depositors. If you're a small depositor, maybe a hundred percent of your money can be freed. If you have a hundred thousand dollars in the bank, maybe 90% of your money can be freed. If you have five hundred thousand dollars in the bank, maybe half of your money could be freed. And if you have 10 million dollars in the bank, maybe 10% of your money can be freed. So it's not the same for everybody. The more money you have, the more money is blocked. The less money you have the less money is blocked. On average 40% of the funds can be liberated, 60% are held in CDs, but these CDs are tradable. So maybe you have a 10-million-dollar deposit and they have freed for you two million dollars, you don't need two million dollars to live but instead of keeping these two million dollars in the bank, you can buy a CD from somebody else to earn more money on it, because you don't need the money immediately and it's a tradable instrument.

Consequently, whoever has a CD now can get cash from the person that doesn't want the cash. You create a market, this is what markets are about: I can make shoes,



**Unscrupulous leaders:** *Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland*

but I cannot eat the shoes and you can make some food, but you need shoes. So, we exchange. This is the idea.

**BL: What do you think of the current Government?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** you know, there are so many good things about them and so many bad things. Nobody is perfect. Obviously they want to succeed but every Government before them wanted to succeed. Even the bad Ministers we had were ministers that wanted to succeed and to succeed they wanted to do something that the people will say "Well done! you are fantastic!". So they want to succeed they want to do well, but the problem is they don't have the experience to do well and so they mess things up

for themselves and for others.

**BL: What about the exchange rate of the Lebanese Lira?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I don't know where it's going to be but it should be freed, it should be devalued and freed, because we need to know what is the real value of our money. This is the only way we can budget properly. The only way we know how to manage our financial affairs, going forward in the future. **BL:** Is there going to be further devaluation? **Ziad Alexandre Hayek:** Of course, it's happening every day. The problem is: are we going to let it happen like this, with black market thievery, or are we going to stand up to our responsibilities and free the exchange rate officially? I think we have to be respon-

sible and free it officially.

**BL: What do you think of Central Bank Governor, Riad Salameh? Is it high time for him to quit?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I am surprised he wanted to stay. If I were him, I would have left a long time ago. I think that the Government back in 2010 when our economy was doing very well and we had growth rate of 8%, should have switched from a fixed peg to a crawling peg, letting the Lira devalue in a controlled way against the US Dollar. Unfortunately, they didn't do that.

**BL: Ziad Hayek, what about working from home? What are the its advantages and disadvantages?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I think anything can



**Aspirations for a better economy:** *Ziad Alexandre Hayek, Managing Partner, Hayek Associates, Washington DC, USA, President, World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, Geneva, Switzerland, Vice Chair, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on PPP, Geneva, Switzerland*

be done working from home, and working with modern communications is of a tremendous importance, especially to a country like ours. I'll tell you why. If you go back to pre-1992, we didn't have the functioning telephone system until Lebanon set up its cellular network in the early nineties, so for anything you needed to do, you needed to get in your car and drive and see if the person that you wanted to talk to was there. Sometimes you drove and the person wasn't there, so you had to go back home and drive again the next day. Imagine how much fuel was being wasted at that time. Nowadays, we have telephones that work. We don't have to get in our car and drive to get somewhere to talk to someone. So we did very well with cellular telephony. Now, in the meantime, we increased the number of cars in Lebanon to the point where we have traffic jams everywhere almost all the time. That fuel is being burnt for nothing. Especially commuters to work. Commuting in the morning, com-

muting in the evening. The fuel bill for our economy is tremendous, especially that we're not an oil producing country. The pollution is tremendous, and road communication in our country is very poor to start with, so, if you are living in North East Lebanon in Hermel or Baalbek, getting to the capital to work then is a torture. So, for all these reasons, we need absolutely to encourage anything that can be done in this regard. Video conferencing, and online communications can help us eventually create jobs in rural areas. This would be a major achievement, which we are not able to service well today.

**BL: What's your advice to the Lebanese Government?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** My advice to the Lebanese government is to pay attention to expertise. Ministers need to surround themselves with experts. Ideally those experts would be from within the public administration, but seeing how poorly staffed it has become, with clientelism, not merit being the main deter-

minant of who get hired, that expertise needs to be sourced from outside the administration for the time being. I say Ministers need to surround themselves with true experts. The emphasis is on the word "true" – not generic so-called experts whose main qualification is "loyalty", not "expertise".

**BL: How to end corruption in Lebanon?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I personally don't believe in people not being corrupt. They say that Winston Churchill is famous for having told someone who kept wanting to bribe him, with ever larger sums "I never want to see you again". "Did I offend you?", said the man. "No", said Churchill, "but you got very close to my price". So, everybody can be corrupted and therefore it's just a matter of how much. So for example, they said that they need to increase the salaries of the judges so that the judges will not be tempted anymore. So, they doubled the salaries. Say they went from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a month. If the bribe is going to be \$20,000, maybe the judge will reject it. But if the bribe is \$50,000, what will happen? So, what difference does it make? The important thing is for us to trust in systems, not in people; because the system has multiple layers of checks and balances. For example, at the airport, we have a system of checks and balances, you show your passport to somebody before you get to the passport control. At the passport control, they see your passport and they stamp it, before you get on the plane a third person reviews your passport to make sure that they stand correctly and we don't know who is the person that is going to be at the door of the plane, so this is a system, where you don't know who is the person that you're going to be dealing with and there's going to be multiple check points along the way. That is a system to fight corruption. Another way to fight corruption is of course what everybody talks about: Disintermediation, where we can avoid personal contact and therefore the opportunity of bribing or being bribed.

Digitalization is important and if you cannot digitalize, you need to have a multiple layer system of checks and balances.

**BL: You are famed for your ability to come up with important financial solutions for countries that have serious financial problems, how can you help your country?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** Currently, I'm trying, with the financial rescue plan, to help the Lebanese Government. I don't have any official position. I'm not getting paid for it. I consider it my civil duty to go around and tell people "look, this is one way to deal with our financial crisis, that doesn't let depositors lose their money and doesn't let our banking system fail". So, you know, the only thing anyone of us can do is try to bring people

around to a certain level of understanding and so to raise awareness. I think raising awareness is the most important thing in politics. In a democratic system, if you take a decision, there's going to be many people that are going to say it's the wrong decision, if you explain why you made this decision, there's going to be much less people arguing with you. Among our politicians, we have one politician who explains and therefore, convinces people of his argument, and that's Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah who is able to spend an hour on TV and takes you to where he wants to; and even if you're against him sometimes, you say "Ok, he's right in a way". Consider his approach as opposed to that of politicians who go on TV and tell you this is how it should be, and then you say "Why?" I mean, in your mind, you have many reasons why it should not be like that. But if the person has explained why and has refuted all the opposing argument you could think of, you feel at least intellectually (if not emotionally) convinced. Basically, I'm trying to say that it is very important for politicians, for leaders in general to explain their position, and therefore lead instead of sheepishly following opinion polls.

**BL: How to avoid the current global recession during this pandemic and post the pandemic?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** We want the economy to recover and ironically this time the economic recovery has more to do with healthcare than it has to do with economic measures. Even if we take as good economic measures as we want and if the people are dying and they are worried about showing up to work, and people are mistrustful of the judgment of the Government, then the economy is going to be in a very bad shape. Hence, the first line of defense against economic recession are the smart, preventive healthcare measures like social distancing that requires a high level of civic awareness. Interestingly, we seem to be doing rather well on that front, compared to other countries. So, that's something for us to be proud of, and now, as soon as the curve slopes down, and we get beyond the healthcare emergency, the measure that needs to be taken is injecting a lot of liquidity in the financial system. In every economy, one way of injecting liquidity is basically to print money. As a result, many countries are printing more money now, and they are distributing the money in ways that sometimes are efficient and other times are inefficient. As they print money and increase liquidity, there are two things they should not forget. The first is to beware of inflation. Not every time that you increase liquidity and print money, you will get inflation. Sometimes you don't, because there are many other

factors in the economy. But if you start seeing that inflation is creeping up you need to establish some strict price controls and start managing the interest rates and I think most central banks today around the world are very familiar with ways to combat inflation. The second aspect is less obvious, and it is usually forgotten, and that is the involvement of people and civil society. This can play a very important role in economic recovery and in easing the pain of adjusting to a new reality. It basically goes back to the principle of solidarity. The society that shows more solidarity, will do much better than societies that don't, and the type of solidarity that I'm talking about is in itself of two different types. The first type is one that we are very familiar with in our country and that is family cohesion. So, somebody is not doing well, their brother, sister and family take them in and help them out. We have been used to this during Lebanon's wars and this is an amazing thing that many other societies don't have because they don't have family cohesion. This will help us get on our feet faster. The other type of solidarity is through the actual institutions of civil society, through all the NGOs that deal with children, poor families, and orphans. These things are very important, and we have seen in Lebanon how during the past few weeks there has been so many different entities that have come up with packages of food for families in need. NGOs that are usually devoted to child safety have done that, as have NGOs that belong to religious orders, churches and mosques. I really believe in the power of civil society. We are very lucky in this country to have this advantage.

**BL: What's the role of the public and the private sectors in dealing with the current conditions to overcome this crisis?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I don't think that the private sector can play a big role. Unfortunately, the private sector is not the best placed to deal with social crises. The private sector does very well when the conditions for its development are good. It can then produce a lot of wealth and well-being. But it is not the best at emergencies, like a financial crisis and a pandemic. This is when the public sector must step in. Why do we need the public sector? We don't need the public sector to give us electricity. Electricity can be provided by any private company. We don't need the public sector to provide us with water, telecoms, etc. We really need the public sector to safeguard our lives and livelihood, i.e. provide for common defense, enforce the rule of law, regulate our social interactions, facilitate the growth of our economy, secure our sustenance and provide for our healthcare. In other words,

the priority of the public sector should be our National Security. Unfortunately, we don't have this concept in Lebanon and we don't operate our Government on that basis. National security is anything that might threaten people, even food supply and of course, the coronavirus issue. I'm trying to say that in times of crisis we need the public sector even more than ever. It alone can provide what none of us alone can provide. Of course, we all know anecdotes of how the private sector has reacted and helped. We have companies that were manufacturing paper towels got into manufacturing masks. I sit on the board of The Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) and during the crisis it teamed up with the university medical hospital of Maounat Hospital in Jbeil and with a company called Technica to create a respirator. It's a small size respirator that can be moved to patient's room or to the ICU and it's very compact, and this is fantastic. But this is not enough. We need the public sector.

**BL: How do you see the post Coronavirus era?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I'm always optimistic. I like to be optimistic. I think people are going to realize that we live in one world and we need to pull together. I'm hoping that in the post corona era, we will see people cooperating. Of course, they'll continue to cooperate on pandemic fighting, but I hope to see them fighting for climate change, which is an important issue today though we don't feel it but our planet is really suffering and it's suffering in so many ways, like the death of bees, especially in countries like ours that is becoming ever more urbanized. We're covering our land with cement. The bees have a very hard time surviving and that means that our flora is going to be in danger. That means we're not going to be able to have proper agriculture. I mean it's an ecosystem. I really think that this is the silver lining of the pandemic. The other thing is that, we have the perfect storm between political crisis, financial crisis, and health crisis. As per the saying: What doesn't kill me makes me better. I think we're going to be a better society. We're going to learn a lot of lessons. We're going to be better prepared. It's a time for us to learn.

Of course, I think from an economic social perspective, there is going to be hardships along the way. Let's say, Lebanon loses 25% of its GDP in this crisis and our GDP then normally grows at around 2 percent. We're going to need something like 20 years to be able to get back to the GDP we had before the crisis. That's a lot of time lost. Sadly, we may have a lost generation. This is going to be a very difficult period of adjustment around the world. Now, what's important

about managing the aftermath of this pandemic is whether we are going to have a V-shaped recovery or are we going to have a U-shaped recovery? What decisions we take along the way is what's going to determine the shape of the recovery. In my opinion, governments should take decisions that are going to create a V-shaped recovery. Otherwise, the suffering will drag for a long time and more of our young men and women will be affected by it economically and socially, as they try to build their lives. My financial rescue plan for Lebanon today is designed to create a financial V-shaped recovery as opposed to the current Government plan, which creates a U-shaped recovery. These are the differences.

**BL: What do you think of the collapse in oil prices?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** The collapse in oil prices was something that was bound to happen. It's like every commodity. At one point in time, we have a lot of use for it and then we don't. For example, natural rubber was obtained from trees in Southeast Asia, and there were a lot of rubber plantations and then when we develop synthetic rubber, natural rubber lost much of its value. It still exists and it still has some uses, but it's no longer the hot commodity it used to be. Oil is the same thing. We have maximized our use of oil for everything. We used it for energy, for plastics, for all kinds of uses even in medicine and food, and now we are using much less of it for energy, because we're starting to learn how to capture solar energy better, wind energy and renewable energy in general. Therefore, we're reducing our use of oil. We're reducing its consumption for transportation. So, the use for oil that's going to remain is going to be mainly for materials like plastics etc. Eventually, that was going to happen anyway. The decline in oil prices that happened recently was mainly because of the pandemic, but there was already another factor at play and that's the hydraulic fracturing (or fracking) of shale rock. Fracking meant, for instance, that the U.S., which used to be the largest importer of oil in the world. It became now became a net exporter. These are huge changes in the industry. I think they're going to continue. I don't see them stopping but as the price of oil declines, there's going to be less and less producers that can produce it efficiently. So, Saudi Arabia, which has the cheapest cost of producing oil in the world, will continue to do very well. The U.S., which has a very high production cost, will not do well in the long term. In Lebanon, if we're going to discover oil below 1500-meter depth in the sea, we're not going to be competitive. So, there are going to be countries that are

very successful and others not.

**BL: How can we promote industry and job creation for Lebanon?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** We need to deal with our financial crisis immediately. We do not have a day to waste. Once it stabilizes, we need to enact all the social, economic, political, judicial, legislative and sectoral reforms everyone talks about. In the longer run, we need to focus on building our infrastructure, hopefully using the CEDRE monies if they will still exist. Infrastructure is the most important job creator, not only because the projects employ a lot of people at all different levels, but also because infrastructure is the bedrock on which we can build competitive industrial, agricultural, and service-oriented job-creating enterprises.

**BL: How do you see the future of the Arab Gulf States?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I think they will continue to do well. Like I said, the cost of oil production there is low in relative terms. I think their populations have developed a kind of maturity, which is certainly greater than our own society's. Many Saudis, Emiratis and Qataris, are highly educated. They have studied abroad and they speak better English than most of us do. They have learnt to deal with globalization much better than we have, because they have had foreign workforces, they're working with all kinds of nationalities, and that is very enriching. Today people living in the Emirates, Oman, Qatar and to a certain degree Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, are experiencing more international interaction than we are. They're learning skills. They're acquiring more information every day.

**BL: How long do you think the current Government will stay?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I don't think it's going to change until we have new elections. I don't feel that there is a strong enough opposition that can bring it down at this point in time. Our opposition is fragmented. Lebanese people did not learn how to build a united opposition. Some people want money for everybody, some people want to change the politicians... I mean everybody wants something different, and they haven't learnt how to present a cohesive plan. Anyway, Lebanon is not the kind of place where you can have a revolution because we're so divided. We have to wait for the elections.

**BL: How do you see the next President of Lebanon?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I hope that the next President of Lebanon will not be like the presidents we've had since the civil war. The first president after the war was a small-time

politician. After that we had a successive line of army generals. I have nothing against army generals, but that's not the kind of leadership we need. We need a statesman for a president. We need leadership that's cosmopolitan, open to the world. We have a government in the middle of a pandemic and in the middle of a major financial crisis needing IMF help and we don't have anybody in our Government that has the proper experience, let alone the proper stature, for communicating with world leaders. Our Prime Minister has not met with any head of state. Our president is boycotted by many countries because he's not the right person to represent Lebanon. We need a president who makes us proud and I don't think we have had presidents that made us proud.

**BL: Do you think that the IMF will grant Lebanon a loan?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** I think it will be with some tough conditions. Ironically, I believe, the conditions are going to be more of a political nature than of an economic nature. The U.S. has a big say in what the IMF does. There's no interest in financing Hezbollah at this point in time nor is any country in Europe going to agree on financing Hezbollah. They're going to influence the IMF. They can stop the IMF from helping Lebanon. Right now, our politics take us in the wrong direction. We cannot be antagonistic to Arab countries and get them to help us, we cannot be antagonistic to Europe and get them to help us, and Russia carries a big stick but economically they're a no-show, and China doesn't care, it doesn't even see us. I think the IMF will help but, it's only after we accept some very harsh conditions.

**BL: Do you have any point to add?**

**ZIAD ALEXANDRE HAYEK:** We need to have our young generation start on matters other than politics. We need to get that disease of politics out of our society. The other countries, their young people enjoy sports, they identify themselves with this team or that team and they go to sport events. In our country, young people identify with this political party or that political party. They carry the colors of the parties instead of carrying the colors of sport teams. This is so destructive, it puts people in these mind frames, where they think they're right and everybody else is wrong. We need our young people to face reality. Everybody has a bit of truth. My dad used to say: "There's no head that isn't wise. Even an insect can find food and even a bird can build a nest out of twigs". Therefore, each one of us has a lot of wisdom and we need to listen to everybody. We should learn to appreciate other people.



**Find your inner peace. Insure.**

Take a load off and free your mind. We at AL MASHREK insurance & reinsurance SAL are always committed to provide our valued customers the most affordable insurance options with outstanding support, service and respect they deserve to free their minds from unexpected risks and to enjoy life.

Since its founding in 1962, AL MASHREK insurance & reinsurance SAL has been engaged in the writing and sales of diverse insurance and reinsurance policies, covering all classes of insurance to protect our customers' financial status, assets, health (medical, life), and legal liability.

For more information regarding "finding your inner peace", please don't hesitate to visit us at [www.almashrek.com.lb](http://www.almashrek.com.lb), scan the QR code above, or e-mail us your questions at [info@almashrek.com.lb](mailto:info@almashrek.com.lb)

[www.almashrek.com.lb](http://www.almashrek.com.lb)



# Assessing the Impact of the Economic and COVID-19 Crises in Lebanon

## 9 Years on: Struggles and Hopes of Syrian refugees in Lebanon

In Lebanon, WFP launched a random and anonymized web survey targeting the Lebanese population as well as Syrian and Palestinian refugees. This survey contributes to a first complete picture of the impacts of the economic crisis and COVID-19 on the livelihoods and food security of people in Lebanon.

- Due to a combination of containment measures for COVID-19 and a worsening economic crisis, two out of every three Lebanese households suffered from a reduced income compared to the previous year, while about 10 percent across all groups reported that their households are resorting to alternative income sources to make ends meet.

- The COVID-19 outbreak and related containment measures have pushed nearly one out of every three Lebanese into unemployment so far, while one in five respondents saw their salary being reduced.

Lebanese respondents living in Akkar were among the highest to report either losing their jobs or having a reduced income due to COVID-19. Moreover, Lebanese women as well as young adults between 25-34 years of age have been particularly affected by reduced salaries. Drastic change in employment status was significantly felt more by Syrian women than men, as 61 percent reported losing their jobs due to COVID-19 compared to 46 percent of Syrian men. The latter proportions of women and men experienced salary reduction or have already been impacted by public unrest.

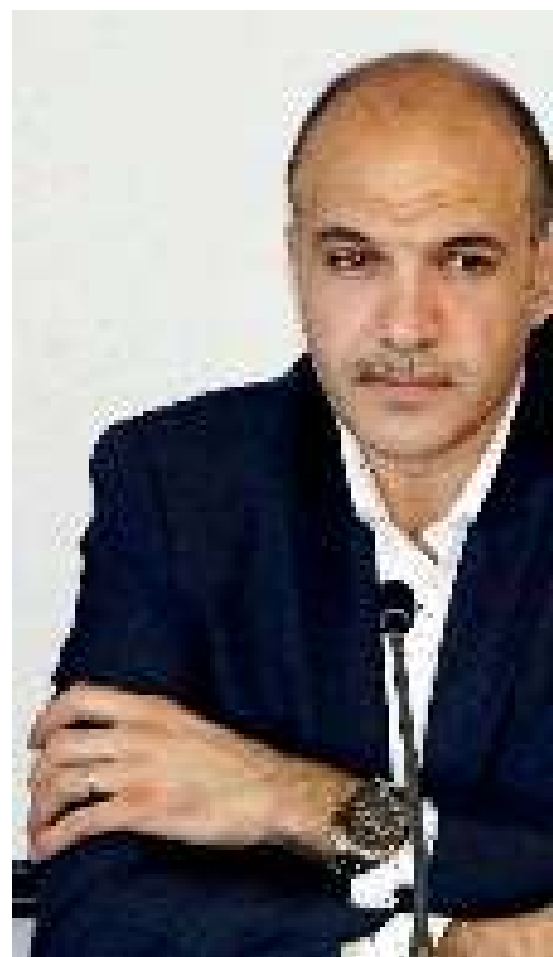
- Economic sectors that have been the most impacted are construction as well as services and sales (incl. accommodation

and tourism, restaurants and food services). Across all three population groups assessed, the main reason for disruption of work activities was that employers had to close businesses or were forced to reduce staff. Syrians were over proportionally affected by these layoffs.

- To bridge income gaps, two-thirds of each population group has resorted to one or more livelihood-based coping strategies in the past month, above all spending less on food was reported strategy most frequently across all three groups. Other top strategies applied included spending savings, asking for friends and family for help and borrowing money on credit to meet essential needs. A considerable percentage of respondents also reported the incapacity to cope. In fact, one in four Syrian refugees have already exhausted their coping capacity, followed by one in five Palestinians and 12 percent of Lebanese.

- Hyper price inflation impacted households' ability to access food. For Lebanese respondents, 41 percent reported not having stockpiled food due to their inability to afford the costs and 15 percent reported not doing so as the prices are changing on a weekly basis. Findings were even more concerning for refugees, with 44 percent of Palestinian respondents and a staggering 64 percent of Syrians reporting the inability to have emergency stocks, mainly due to unaffordability.

- With food prices soaring in Lebanon, food is a major source of concern for a large proportion of respondents across all three groups. Fifty percent of Lebanese, 63 percent of Palestinians and 75 percent of Syrians



Due to a worsening economic crisis, two out of every

three felt worried they would not have enough food to eat over the past month. Those who have lost their jobs – either since or prior to the outbreak – have shown to be more distressed than others.

Lebanese residents in Akkar have reported to be more worried than those living in other governorates.

- Food consumption prior to Ramadan, indicated a situation of concern, especially for Syrian refugees with 44 percent reported eating only one meal over the previous day. One in five Lebanese and Palestinians respondents reported the same.

- To meet their food needs, Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinians are applying one or more food-based coping strategies. Nearly 30 percent of Lebanese living in Akkar are applying more severe coping strategies compared to those of other governorates. Moreover, of particular concern are the Syrian refugees, with 11 percent reporting going a whole day and night without eating and 21 percent skipping meals.

- Based on an analysis of all indicators, the following groups among the Lebanese populations are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity and require special attention. Notably, households that depend on





**every three Lebanese households suffered from a reduced income:** *Minister Hassan Hamad meets a delegation from Ministry of Health employees*

daily casual labour, on support from their friends and family or are living off debt tend to be applying more severe food-based coping strategies than others. In addition, larger families as well as those with one or more dependents and an unemployed head of household are also doing the same to a greater extent than other groups. These coping mechanisms could lead to malnutrition in the longer-term.

- Main concerns raised by all population groups revolved around the sharp deterioration of the economic situation and its associated impacts. Following the recent crises, including rising unemployment rates, the need for money to cover essential needs (incl. food, rent and medicine) have been strongly echoed by the population in Lebanon. Tensions and violence have also been reported to be on the rise, especially by the Lebanese population compared to other groups. More Lebanese women (56%) have perceived tensions than men (52%). In addition, Lebanese women are perceiving a greater increase in domestic violence compared to men, which raises important protection concerns.

- As the situation continues to be ex-

tremely dynamic in the country, on-going monitoring activities using phone surveys and other assessments are critical to help support efforts at strategic planning and targeting for adequate responses. With more information at hand on the impact of the economic and COVID-19 crises, the Government of Lebanon and humanitarian partners will be better equipped to inform their response to the unfolding crises.

Not to forget that Lebanon suffered nine years into the Syria crisis, Lebanon remains the country with the largest concentration of refugees per capita, hosting an estimated 1.5 million Syrians.

The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)-funded Lebanon Protection Consortium (LPC) brings together NRC, Action Against Hunger and Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC) to respond to shocks, persistent humanitarian needs and legal protection concerns of Syrian and Palestinian refugees in addition to engaging in protection-oriented advocacy.

Nine years into the Syria crisis, Lebanon remains the country with the largest concentration of refugees per capita, hosting an estimated 1.5 million Syrians. Together

with around 29,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria who have been accommodated in addition to approximately 175,000 Palestinians already present or born in Lebanon since 1948, this relatively small country has been under considerable economic and social pressure.

Since mid-October 2019, Lebanon has been experiencing political and social unrest. The current crisis is widely considered the most serious financial and economic crisis in decades. These latest developments have also had an impact on the refugee communities. Many have had decreased access to livelihoods and the cost of basic goods has increased. The wide-spread fear of political repercussions has led refugees to reduce their movements to a minimum. This has further exacerbated vulnerabilities that predated the crisis, including challenges in obtaining legal residency, substandard shelter conditions, limited access to water and sanitation and livelihood opportunities.

The people that the Lebanon Protection Consortium features in this booklet shed light on challenges that refugees and Lebanese are facing every day.

# Qatar Government's Initiatives Will Ensure Sustainable Development Amidst COVID-19

The graphic is a promotional poster for a webinar. On the left, under the heading 'Speakers', are five portrait photos of the participants: Dr. Mohammed Bin Hamad Bin J. Al-Thani, Abdulaziz Bin Nasser Al-Khalifa, Sheikha Alanoud bint Hamad Al-Thani, Rashid Bin Ali Al-Mansoori, and Dr. R. Seetharaman. Below each photo is their name and title. At the bottom of this section are logos for Doha Bank, QDB, QFC, and QSE. On the right, a dark blue vertical banner contains the Arabic title 'التنمية المستدامة في قطر' (Sustainable Development in Qatar) and the English title 'SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN QATAR'. At the top of the banner are icons for Facebook Live and YouTube.

**Doha Bank webinar featured experts and high-profile speakers:** Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Bin Hamad Bin J. Al-Thani, Director of Public Health at the Ministry of Public Health, Abdulaziz Bin Nasser Al-Khalifa, CEO of Qatar Development Bank (QDB), Sheikha Alanoud bint Hamad Al-Thani, Managing Director of Business Development at Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), and Rashid Bin Ali Al-Mansoori, CEO of Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE) and Dr. R. Seetharaman, CEO of Doha Bank who delivered the concept note

In the framework of its recent efforts to raise awareness about Covid-19 pandemic, Doha Bank has held a webinar entitled “Sustainable Developments in Qatar” on June 17, in the presences of representatives from leading government institutions. The webinar addressed several points of discussion including the economic repercussions of the outbreak, the Qatari government’s action plan and measurements to support entrepreneurship and private sector, and the role of sustainable development initia-

tives in reviving the economy.

The webinar featured experts and high-profile speakers which are Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Bin Hamad Bin J. Al-Thani, Director of Public Health at the Ministry of Public Health, Abdulaziz Bin Nasser Al-Khalifa, CEO of Qatar Development Bank (QDB), Sheikha Alanoud bint Hamad Al-Thani, Managing Director of Business Development at Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), and Rashid Bin Ali Al-Mansoori, CEO of Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE).

Delivering the Concept note, Dr. R.

Seetharaman, CEO of Doha Bank, said: “According to IMF April 2020, as a result of the pandemic, the global economy is projected to contract sharply by –3 percent in 2020, much worse than during the 2008–09 financial crisis. According to OECD June 2020 outlook, If a second outbreak occurs triggering a return to lockdowns, world economic output is forecast to plummet 7.6% this year, before climbing back 2.8% in 2021. According to World Bank forecasts, the global economy will shrink by 5.2% this year. According to WTO April

2020 outlook, World merchandise trade is set to plummet by between 13 and 32% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A 2021 recovery in trade is expected, but dependent on the duration of the outbreak and the effectiveness of the policy responses. Growth revival by Qatar in 2021 is expected to be 5% in 2021 which is highest amongst the Gulf countries, According to IMF April 2020. Qatar unveiled stimulus packages worth 75 billion riyals for the private sector to help mitigate the economic impact of the coronavirus outbreak. Qatar sold \$10 billion in bonds in tranches of 5, 10, and 30 years in April 2020. Qatar Government's initiatives will ensure sustainable development amidst COVID-19.

Speaking about the QDB's response to the pandemic, Al-Khalifa said: "Because of our swift response to the blockade, we had the experience necessary and were fully prepared to effectively respond to any crisis, which is why we were able to respond to the pandemic effectively. Since the outbreak, we have launched several initiatives to minimize the impact of Covid-19 on the private sector ecosystem, as we made strategic decisions that supported SMEs. We also listened intently to entrepreneurs' needs, and prioritized business continuity. QDB is focusing on sustainability in terms of operations as well as communication with entrepreneurs and SMEs across Qatar. Sustainability is a key driver in developing a knowledge-based economy, one of the main Qatar National Vision 2030 Pillars. Private sector institu-

tions should focus on upgrading services and enhancing internal operations to prioritize sustainability. QDB has established a strategy for developing and promoting Qatari products in global markets, securing deals worth over QAR One billion in the first quarter of the year."

Elaborating on the government's strategy to contain Covid-19, Sheikh Dr. Mohammed said: "The rapid spread of Covid-19 across the world, with absence of vaccine and treatment left governments with little time to respond. Now, Qatar is flattening the curve and from an economic perspective, Qatar is ensuring a rapid but sustainable recovery. Qatar decided carefully to implement a safe and sustainable exit strategy, with continuing of the necessary restrictions on social gatherings, social distancing and use of personal protective equipment".

The official added: "In reality, and across the world, easing restrictions is a process of trial and error. In Qatar, we never test out the wrong keys first to find the one that fits. We hold our own key to success: the cross-sectoral collaboration and the informed decisions that shape the future of our nation".

Al-Mansoori highlighted QSE's sustainability efforts to support the local economy, saying: "At Qatar Stock Exchange we believe we can and should play a significant role in promoting sustainability as an imperative by introducing and supporting initiatives which deal with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues. Our listed companies

cover a large cross section of the Qatari economy, representing approximately two thirds of total economic output. They are therefore key to setting the sustainability agenda and influencing other sectors and participants within the economy."

In her remarks, Sheikha Alanoud addressed the importance of Doha Bank's webinar, noting: "I'm pleased to have joined such a timely discussion on sustainable developments in Qatar and engage with expert points of view on how these developments are proving critical to the success of the business community during Covid-19. Sustainable development has long been a core pillar of Qatar's vision in advancing its economy, and it has both shaped our nation as a thriving business hub and our economy as highly resilient in times of crisis and otherwise. Qatar's major infrastructural development scheme is key to our nation's success in diversifying its economy. Legislative and business reforms continue to shape Qatar as a stimulating business environment. QFC has achieved QAR 75bn in total assets under management. QFC also strengthened its digitalisation processes for firms' incorporation, ensuring that all automated processes are approved swiftly."

Dr. Seetharaman moderated the webinar and held Q&A sessions with the guest speakers that touched upon prominent aspects, such as how small and medium-sized enterprises can make optimal use of government policies in order to fend off the adverse economic consequences wrought by Covid-19 outbreak.

## Football Will Return: Qatar Virtually Unveils World Cup Venue

Qatar inaugurated its latest new World Cup stadium recently not with a sold-out football fixture, but with a socially-distanced tribute to the workers on the frontline of the fight against coronavirus.

Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra musicians sporting masks and gloves surrounded by candles played a soaring orchestral piece on the turf of the new Education City Stadium in a clip broadcast to mark the stadium's opening.

It was interspersed with images of medical professionals and other frontline workers who made their way through the 40,000-capacity ground, which was shown with eerily empty stands, to applause from the Qatar national team.

"This is all a message of hope. And really, a big thank you to frontline workers around the world," Nasser al-Khater, the

chief executive of the 2022 World Cup, said after the inauguration.

"It's a small token of appreciation to them."

Education City is the second of the seven stadiums being built from scratch for the 2022 tournament to be inaugurated.

It had been due to host the semi-final of the Club World Cup on December 18, but its opening was postponed because of delays to certification. It has yet to host a public fixture.

Nasser insisted that "more than 80 percent" of the infrastructure required for 2022 was now complete.

Hassan al-Thawadi, the secretary general of the Qatari organisation charged with delivering the tournament, said finishing the stadium amid the pandemic had been "a big challenge".

"But we managed to overcome it," he said.

"We were able to maintain the continuity of work in a positive way, but at the same time ensure a safe and healthy environment for everyone."

Alongside the musical tribute, a pyrotechnic show both inside and outside the stadium was used to mark its completion.

In a video message for the opening, FIFA president Gianni Infantino paid tribute to those "who are still fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic".

"The new stadium in Education City reminds us that football will return," he said.

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani used his clip to honour "the teams working on the frontline".

"We truly believe in better days to come, the days when we will enjoy watching the stars of the game together," he said.--AFP

# Empowering and Supporting the Steadfastness of the Palestinian People on Their Land

## The President, IsDB, Inaugurates the Constitutive Meeting of the Shareholders Board for the Economic Empowerment Fund for the Palestinian People



**Inauguration ceremony:** Dr Bandar Hajjar, the Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group and Chairman of the Shareholders Board for the Economic Empowerment Fund for the Palestinian People

**D**r Bandar Hajjar, the Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group and Chairman of the Shareholders Board for the Economic Empowerment Fund for the Palestinian People, inaugurated the constitutive virtual meeting of the Fund, marking the official starting signal for the activities of the Fund, which was established to empower and support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people on their land.

Dr Hajjar reaffirmed IsDB's commitment as founder and manager of the Fund to working jointly and earnestly with all partners to ensure a successful start for the Fund towards achieving its goals in accordance with the highest professional standards and the best practices of good governance.

Dr Hajjar, who is the originator of the international initiative to develop, disseminate and streamline the economic empowerment model among IsDB Member Countries, emphasised that the Economic Empowerment Fund for the Palestinian People was the first true building block towards

achieving socio-economic development through economic empowerment.

He stated that the IsDB decided to contribute \$100 million to the Fund's capital, while the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) contributed \$52 million, and the Al-Aqsa Fund followed suit with a contribution of \$13 million. Subsequently, the IsDB approached other shareholders from the Palestinian public and private sectors, with a number of prestigious institutions being invited to join this blessed endeavour. Hence, the Palestinian Investment Fund contributed \$25 million and the Palestine Prosperity Fund \$30 million.

In addition, the IsDB is working hard on an ambitious plan to mobilise additional resources and attract other shareholders with a view to mobilising the declared Fund capital of \$500 million.

The Economic Empowerment Fund for the Palestinian People aims to empower economically over 300,000 Palestinian families, or 1.5 million Palestinians, over the next decade, to reach a target contribution equivalent to 5% to 10% of GDP, through supporting local production sectors to reduce imports from the occupying power.

As for the next step to strengthen the Fund, Dr Hajjar stated that it would be capacity-building for the Fund through developing its investment policy, operations and procedures manuals, organisational structure, as well as governance mechanisms. This is in addition to initiating the work to finalise an investment map based on comparative advantages of the Palestinian economy, to guide the Fund in the selection of high value-added and labour-intensive strategic sectors. He said that the presence of experienced partners in the Palestinian market, such as the Investment Fund and the Prosperity Fund, would no doubt be of great help to the Fund during the upcoming capacity-building phase and would facilitate the work of the advisory team that would be set up for this purpose. He further stressed that attention would

be given to the human capital as the Fund works to attract the best talents according to the recruitment plan to be adopted later.

Dr Hajjar stressed the importance of good governance and the need for the Fund to adhere to the best standards and practices of governance followed globally by similar development funds to ensure the Fund's transparency, integrity and independence, which are important keys to encourage and mobilise partnerships and other resources to further strengthen the Fund and help it achieve its goals in the specified timeframe set for it.

The Islamic Development Bank is very pleased to be invited to this high-level pledging event for the humanitarian crises in Yemen. IsDB is also very confident that under the joint leadership of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Nations, this event will conclude in strong humanitarian support for the Republic of Yemen.

I commend the UN Secretary General and Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs for having gathered all of us to discuss how best to protect the lives and livelihoods of the People of Yemen.

The IsDB is committed to support the social and economic development of Yemen, which is a founding member of the Bank. Since its inception, IsDB Group has provided more than US\$1 billion financing to Yemen. The active portfolio is currently composed of 17 operations amounting to US\$214 million which are under active implementation despite the difficult conditions on ground.

IsDB Group's development assistance to Yemen will amount to US\$100 million over the next four years (2020-2023). This amount includes US\$36.6 million already under discussion to support the Government's efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, our teams in the Bank are actively engaged with the Officials of the Government of Yemen to finalise the urgent support in health, agriculture and fisheries sectors identified by the Government as requiring urgent support.

# Saudi Arabia Cuts Allocations for Vision 2030 Initiatives and Mega Projects



**Amid the worsening situation with regards to the Covid-19 outbreak and the decline in oil prices, the government decided to implement cuts allocations for Vision 2030:** Saudi Arabia's top 20 construction projects of 2019

**S**audi Arabia is implementing a range of austerity measures following the announcement on 11 May that the Kingdom posted a \$9bn budget deficit in the first quarter of 2020. The central bank's foreign reserves fell in March to their lowest since 2011, while oil revenues in the first quarter fell 24% from a year earlier to \$34bn, dragging total revenues down 22%.

Amid the worsening situation with regards to the Covid-19 outbreak and the decline in oil prices, the government decided to raise value added tax (VAT) from 5% to 15%, effective 1 July, and to suspend cost of living allowance paid to state workers starting from 1 June, according to Saudi Press Agency (SPA). According to the ministry of finance, the tax increase will not have much impact on revenue for 2020 because people are spending less under the curfew, but it will shore up the government purse for the coming years as the world recovers from the pandemic crisis.

The Kingdom is rationalising its spending due to the unplanned fiscal and monetary policies to support the health sector and the overall economy and mitigate the economic effects of the pandemic and plunging oil prices. Earlier in May, authorities announced that they will reduce spending in non-priority areas of the 2020 budget by SAR50bn (\$13.3bn), account-

ing for 2% of GDP, to accommodate some of the initiatives announced in response to Covid-19 so that overall spending for 2020 remain close to what was planned. To further improve spending efficiency, a ministerial committee has been established to study the financial benefits paid to all employees, contractors, and entities that include the Vision 2030 programs, and present its recommendations within 30 days.

The Saudi Government's revenues will suffer from the low oil prices and this will likely impact the government's economic spending programme and mega infrastructure projects in the pipeline. In the short- to medium-term, the government's diversification drive will be severely disrupted. Saudi Arabia will cut some allocations for Vision 2030, with a total cost of SAR100bn (\$26.6bn). Delays in awarding contracts among other tough measures could push back the execution of high-ticket projects under Vision 2030. The construction of both the tourism hub on the Red Sea and the Neom entertainment city outside of Riyadh will have their timelines extended as announced by the finance ministry. Social infrastructure and oil and gas projects now have the highest priority in terms of investments, but the pace of spending will slow.

Construction on major commercial work, especially in the hospitality sector, is likely to face delays or cancellations.

Religious tourism suffered a setback when the Kingdom took the decision to close off the holy cities of Mecca and Medina to everyone, thus barring Umrah during the holy month of Ramadan and the high likelihood of cancelling the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Tourism generates very high revenues (almost four million tourists per year), due in particular to the Hajj. The Kingdom's tourism ministry announced that it expects the tourism sector's revenues to decline by 35%-45% this year, compared to 2019, due to the containment measures taken by the government to fight the pandemic. Reflecting these developments, major religious-tourism expansionary projects are at most risk, notably the third phase of the Grand Mosque in Mecca has been paused. The entertainment sector will also have a set back as social distancing gets prolonged. One of the main goals of the country's Vision 2030 is to increase Saudi household spending on domestic entertainment from 2.9% to 6% of total expenditure. There are 140 cinemas planned to open in 30 malls across the Kingdom, with the contagion going on, construction will be slow in this sector. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia plans to diversify its oil-dependent economy through tourism, with the sector expected to contribute to 10% of gross domestic product by 2030.

# Appointment of Abdullah Saleh Kamel as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of ABG



**New appointment:** Abdullah Saleh Kamel as Chairman of the Board, to succeed the late Sheikh Saleh Abdullah Kamel



**ABG will continue to prosper:** Adnan Ahmed Yousif, President & Chief Executive of Al Baraka Banking Group

**T**he Board of Directors of Al Baraka Banking Group BSC (BSC), the leading Islamic banking group based in Bahrain, has announced the appointment of Abdullah Saleh Kamel as Chairman of the Board, to succeed the late Sheikh Saleh Abdullah Kamel, the Founder of the Group who passed away last month. The Central Bank of Bahrain has approved this appointment.

Abdullah Saleh Kamel is considered to be one of the first personalities to have been part of the establishment of the Group, and he served as Vice Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the Executive Committee for several years, and has been amongst those who have actively contributed to the development of the Group's diversification and expansion strategies and supervised their implementation throughout these past years. Abdullah Saleh Kamel is credited with many of the Group's achievements alongside his father, the Group's Founder, may God have mercy on him.

Additionally, Abdullah Saleh Kamel is the Chairman of Aseer Company, Chairman of Amlak Real Estate Development and Finance, Chairman of Okaz Press and Publishing Corporation and Vice-Chairman of King Abdullah Economic City Emaar. He has previously held various

executive positions at Dallah Al Baraka Group, culminating in the position of Vice President for Business Sector until 1999. He has over 30 years' experience in key business, investment and banking positions.

On this occasion, Abdullah Saleh Kamel said, "I extend my thanks and appreciation to my brothers in the Group's Board of Directors, who have honored me to Chair the Group's Board of Directors, the position in which I believe I have a great challenge, because I succeed the Founder and Captain of the Group and the leader of its march, our father and the father of all, Sheikh Saleh Abdullah Kamel, may God have mercy on him, who was known to all as the pioneer of modern Islamic banking and the founder of its renaissance in many Islamic countries. We have pledged ourselves to stick to his principles, approach, and follow the noble values in continuing the successes and excellence of the Group. We also express our thanks and appreciation to all official and regulatory authorities in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the countries where our units operate, and to all our partners and employees, who, thanks to their cooperation, we will continue to march, God willing."

On his part, Adnan Ahmed Yousif,

President & Chief Executive of Al Baraka Banking Group, said, "While we feel the enormity of our loss with the departure of the Group's Founder, Sheikh Saleh Abdullah Kamel, may God have mercy on him, we would like to express our gratitude for the acceptance of Abdullah Saleh Kamel to assume the Chairmanship of the Group's Board of Directors, with the blessing of the board of directors and the supervisory authorities in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This acceptance provides a sure guarantee that the Group will continue with the same approach its late Founder chose for it. Abdullah is also one of the founders of the Group, which he has led with all dedication and sincerity in its path throughout these years, and we are expressing our full confidence in his wisdom in leading the Group that will continue to pioneer the Islamic banking industry regionally and internationally."

Al Baraka Banking Group ("ABG") is licensed as an Islamic wholesale bank by the Central Bank of Bahrain and is listed on Bahrain Bourse and NasdaqDubai. It is a leading international Islamic banking group providing its unique services in countries with a population totaling around one billion. The Group has a wide geographical presence in the form of subsidiary banking units and representative offices in 17 countries, which in turn provide their services through over 700 branches. Al Baraka Banking Group has operations in Jordan, Egypt, Tunis, Bahrain, Sudan, Turkey, South Africa, Algeria, Pakistan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Morocco and Germany, in addition to two branches in Iraq and two representative offices in Indonesia and Libya.

ABG and its Units offer retail, corporate, treasury and investment banking services, strictly in accordance with the principles of the Islamic Shari'a. The authorized capital of ABG is US\$ 2.5 billion.

S&P Global Ratings has updated the long-term rating on Al Baraka Banking Group to 'BB-' with a 'Stable' Outlook, while affirming the 'B' short-term rating of the bank. ABG has also been rated A3 (short term) by Islamic International Rating Agency (IIRA). IIRA has also rated ABG on the national scale at A+ (bh) / A2 (bh) with a fiduciary score of 81-85, the highest level amongst Islamic Financial Institutions in the region.

# Al Baraka Bank Signs MoU with UNDP to Achieve SDGs



**Signing ceremony:** Al Baraka Bank Signs MoU with UNDP to Achieve SDGs

**A**l Baraka Bank, operating in the field of Islamic finance in Tunisia and the Maghreb, signed in Tunis, a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Tunisia.

The memorandum of understanding signed by Al Baraka Bank CEO Mohamed el Moncer and UNDP Resident Representative to Tunisia Steve Utterwulghe seeks to achieve some SDGs as well as the 33 targets of the SDGs as defined by the United Nations and Member States, in line with the priorities of Al Baraka Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy.

Under this agreement, the two sides will work together to achieve the SDGs 1 (no poverty), 3 (good health and well-being), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 7 (clean and affordable energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure).

El Moncer said he was delighted by this

signing of a declaration of understanding which is the first of its kind at country level in the Arab World.

For its part, Utterwulghe clarified that this agreement is a continuation of the agreement signed in July 2018 between the UNDP and AL Baraka Banking Group for its adherence to the principles for a responsible banking, which commits the bank to align their commercial strategy to the objectives of sustainable development.

"This partnership will now boost the essential role of the private sector in order to hasten the implementation of the SDGs, especially since there are 10 years left to respond to these SDGs. In addition, public funds are not sufficient for the implementation of these SDGs, hence the need for support from the private sector through the launch of investments and commercial activities that meet these global SDGs.

"The role of UNDP in this partnership is technical support, in terms of providing expertise and which ensures the implementation of the SDGs," he said.

The UNDP representative in Tunisia hoped that this Al Baraka Bank initiative would influence other private sector institutions, while pledging to bring the private sector around the table to involve them in the application process of SDGs.

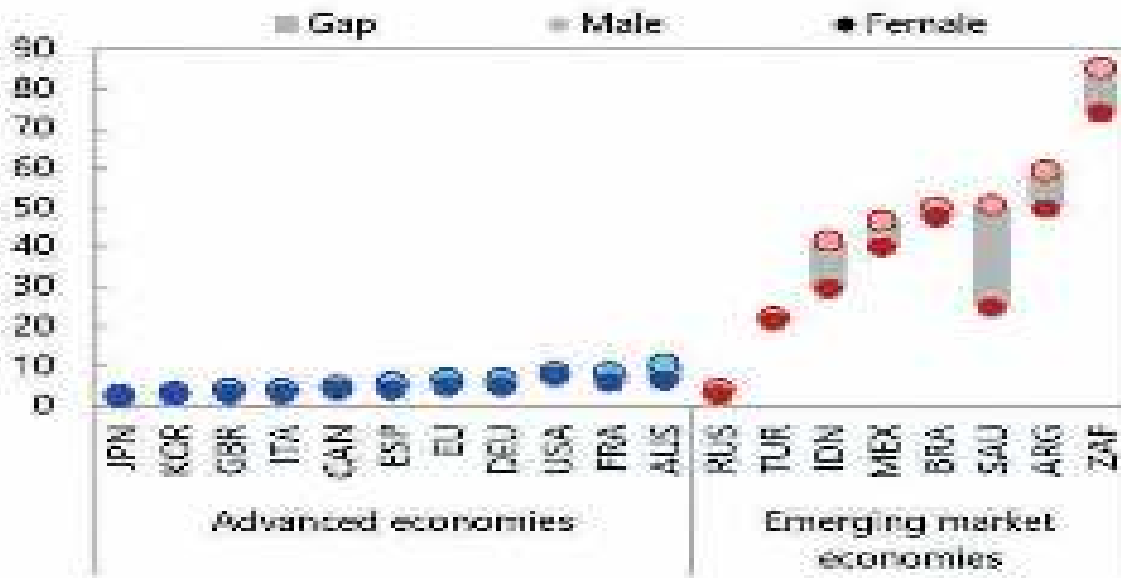
Al Baraka Banking Group ("ABG") is licensed as an Islamic wholesale bank by the Central Bank of Bahrain and is listed on Bahrain Bourse and NasdaqDubai. It is a leading international Islamic banking group providing its unique services in countries with a population totaling around one billion. The Group has a wide geographical presence in the form of subsidiary banking units and representative offices in 17 countries, which in turn provide their services through over 700 branches. Al Baraka Banking Group has operations in Jordan, Egypt, Tunis, Bahrain, Sudan, Turkey, South Africa, Algeria, Pakistan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Morocco and Germany, in addition to two branches in Iraq and two representative offices in Indonesia and Libya.

# The Global Economic Reset—Promoting a More Inclusive Recovery

Policymakers must do everything in their power to promote a more inclusive recovery, one that benefits all segments of society

## Learning poverty

Learning poverty remains an acute problem among low- and middle-income countries (percent of population)



Sources: World Bank, Learning Poverty Database; ILOSTAT, *World Employment and Social Outlook*. Note: Learning poverty is defined as the inability to read and comprehend a simple text by age 10. EU is a population-weighted average, including advanced and emerging market economies. US is a permanent fixture.

### INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

**T**he COVID-19 crisis is inflicting the most pain on those who are already most vulnerable. This calamity could lead to a significant rise in income inequality. And it could jeopardize development gains, from educational attainment to poverty reduction. New estimates suggest that up to 100 million people worldwide could be pushed into extreme poverty, erasing all gains made in poverty reduction in the past three years.

That is why policymakers must do everything in their power to promote a more inclusive recovery, one that benefits all segments of society.

Our new research, prepared jointly with the World Bank for the G20, focuses on how to increase people’s access to opportunities, no matter who they are and where they are from. More equitable access to opportunities is associated with stronger and more sustainable growth and higher income gains for the poor. But unlocking

the full potential of all individuals is not an easy task.

The reality is that low-income households face higher health risks from the virus. They bear the brunt of record-high unemployment and are less likely to benefit from distance learning. Children’s nutrition may also be harmed by the disruption to school-provided meals. According to UN estimates, more than half a billion children worldwide have lost their access to education as a result of coronavirus lockdowns.



Many won't return to the classrooms after the pandemic, with girls more likely than boys to drop out.

These inequalities are truly shocking, but not unexpected. We know from experience and recent IMF analysis that major epidemics often exacerbate pre-existing income inequality.

A policy response like no other

The good news is that governments around the world have deployed extraordinary policy measures to save lives and protect livelihoods. These include extra efforts to protect the poor, with many countries stepping up food aid and targeted cash transfers. Globally, fiscal actions so far amount to about \$10 trillion.

But given the severity of the crisis, significant further efforts are essential. This includes taking the measures needed to avoid a scarring of the economy, including from job losses and higher inequality. It is clear that increasing access to opportunities is now more critical than ever if we are to avoid persistent increases in inequality.

With this in mind, I would like to highlight three priorities:

1. Use fiscal stimulus wisely

Substantial fiscal stimulus will have to be deployed during the recovery phase to boost growth and employment. We know from the global financial crisis that countries that experienced larger output losses relative to the pre-crisis trend tended to have higher increases in inequality.

Yet securing a return to growth is not enough. Let's remember the post-financial crisis reforms and investments that made banking systems more resilient. We will need a similar surge in reforms and investments during the recovery phase to significantly improve the economic prospects of the most vulnerable.

So, we will need a fiscal stimulus that delivers for people. This means scaling up public investment in health care to protect the most vulnerable and minimize the risks from future epidemics. It also means strengthening social safety nets; expanding access to quality education, clean water, and sanitation; and investing in climate-smart infrastructure. Some countries could also expand access to high-quality childcare, which can boost female labor force participation and long-term growth.

These efforts are critical to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. But how can we significantly scale up spending when so many countries are now facing rising public debt? Public debt in emerging markets has risen to levels not seen in 50 years.

The IMF and the World Bank have championed debt service suspension

as a fast-acting measure for countries that lack the financial resources to adequately respond to the crisis. The G20 has responded by agreeing to suspend repayment of official bilateral credit for the poorest countries, from May 1 through the end of 2020.

Over the medium term, there will be room to improve the efficiency of spending and mobilize higher public revenue. There will also be room for tax reform: for example, some advanced and emerging economies could raise their top personal income tax rates without slowing growth. Countries could ensure that the corporate tax system captures an appropriate part of the unusual gains received by the "winners" of the crisis, including perhaps from digital activities. And there should be a concerted effort to combat illicit flows and close tax loopholes, both domestically and internationally.

2. Empower the next generation through education

The virus-related disruption to education has left millions of children at risk of "learning poverty," which means being unable to read and comprehend a simple text by age 10. Driven by poor access to quality schooling, learning poverty is already too high, especially in emerging markets and low-income nations.

We are also concerned about the long-term effects of the crisis on income and education gaps. In our research, we looked at the link between education and inequality. A 10-point increase in a country's Gini coefficient (with such increases observed in some economies around the time of the global financial crisis) is associated with significantly lower educational attainment of about half a year. This could reduce lifetime earnings and cause income and opportunity gaps to become persistent across generations.

In other words, safeguarding our future means safeguarding our children. That is why we need more investment in education—not just spending more on schools and distance-learning capacity, but also improving the quality of education and the access to life-long learning and re-skilling.

These efforts can pay large dividends in terms of growth, productivity, and living standards. Simulations, based on a model reflecting an economy like Brazil, show that reducing the educational attainment gap by a quarter, relative to the OECD average, could boost economic output by more than 14 percent.

3. Harness the power of financial technology

COVID-19 has triggered a mass mi-

gration from analog to digital. But not everyone has seen the benefits; and the growing digital divide is set to become one of the legacies of the crisis.

What can policymakers do? A key priority must be to broaden the access of low-income households and small businesses to financial products, which will allow households to smooth consumption in the face of shocks and businesses to undertake productive investments. This "inclusion revolution" is now gaining momentum as governments are providing emergency cash transfers in record amounts. For example, in Pakistan and Peru, new support programs cover one-third of the population.

Reaching the most vulnerable can be challenging in developing economies, where nearly 70 percent of employment is informal. But this is where fintech opportunities abound. Think of the fact that about two-thirds of all unbanked adults (1.1 billion people) have a mobile phone, and one-quarter have access to the internet. Moving routine cash payments by governments into accounts could reduce the number of unbanked adults by 100 million globally, and even bigger opportunities exist in the private sector.

Of course, governments also need to manage fintech risks. Reforms are needed to promote competition, enhance consumer protection, and fight money laundering. Finding the right balance will be critical for lower inequality and growth.

Our research shows that greater access to finance and technology is associated with higher intergenerational income mobility. And we have estimated that there is a 2- to 3-percentage-point GDP growth difference over the long term between financially inclusive countries and their less inclusive peers.

In all these areas, the IMF is working with the World Bank and many other partners to support countries in this time of crisis. We are deeply committed to helping vulnerable groups through our hands-on technical assistance, policy advice, and lending programs. And we have increased our focus on social spending issues, including safety nets, health and education.

As they move forward, all governments will need to gear up for a more inclusive recovery. This means taking the right measures, especially on fiscal stimulus, education, and fintech. And it means sharing ideas, learning from others, and fostering a greater sense of solidarity.

If there is one lesson from this crisis, it's that our society is only as strong as its weakest member. This should be our compass to a more resilient post-pandemic world.

## Algeria to produce PPE with TIKA's support

North African country, Algeria will make 100,000 face masks, 2,500 suits in cooperation with the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) to further its fight against the coronavirus pandemic. PPE will be manufactured in Algeria's Vocational Education and Training Ministry workshops. The products, which will be made from fabric and other material provided by TIKA, will primarily be distributed among public sector employees.

The North African country has started easing lockdown restrictions, which were imposed to slow the spread of the virus.

It has so far registered 10,484 virus cases, including 732 deaths and 7,074 recoveries, according to the latest data by Johns Hopkins University.

## Arab States Region COVID-19 Situation

All countries in the region have now confirmed COVID-19 cases with a consistent increase in infection cases and deaths including in some of the most fragile countries in the region such as Yemen, Somalia, Syria and Libya. People's resilience is weakened, and while even developed public health systems struggle to cope, the most fragile health systems are ill-equipped for the COVID-19 response.

The deteriorating socio-economic situation creates further hardship in already fragile settings. The region hosts some of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 62.5 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, including 15.5 million women of reproductive age of whom an estimated 1.5 million are pregnant.

The COVID-19 pandemic is straining public health systems and has triggered unprecedented measures by governments around the world, including movement restrictions and shelter-in-place orders. Many countries, including in the Arab States region, are slowly easing some of the most severe mitigation measures.

The UNFPA Arab States Regional Office and country offices support governments and work with UN agencies and national and international partners to minimize disruption to lifesaving sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV) services, provide protective personal equipment (PPE) and support safety of patients and health workers through strengthening infection prevention and control. Amid movement restrictions, alternate solutions to deliver services are underway including virtual outreach, mobile clinics, home visits, hotlines and provision of dignity kits in isolation centres.

The regional office added two technical briefs on COVID-19 Disrupting SDG 5.3: Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation and on The Implications of COVID-19 on Census to the growing body of knowledge around COVID-19 and its impact on SRH and GBV.

## Syrian Arab Republic: COVID-19 Response Update

The report is produced by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in collaboration with humanitarian partners. The next report will be issued on or around 30 June 2020.

- As of 18 June, the Syrian Ministry of Health (MoH) confirmed 178 people tested positive with COVID-19, including seven people who died and 78 who recovered.

- Socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, notably in food security and livelihoods, continue to exacerbate existing substantial humanitarian needs across the country.

- As of 13 June, six people with COVID-19 were reported in north-east Syria (NES), including one death and five people who recovered.

- In north-west Syria (NWS) of a total of 860 samples tested

negative using polymerase chain reaction (PCR), as of 11 June.

- As of 13 June, 5,833 COVID-19 tests have been performed in laboratories in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Lattakia governorates. The enhancement of laboratory and case investigation capacity across Syria remains a priority, as does the timely communication of all information relevant to the safeguarding of public health.

## Sawiris Foundation partners with UNHCR to support vulnerable refugees amidst COVID-19

On the occasion of World Refugee Day, celebrated every year on 20 June, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, partners with the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development (SFSD) to support distressed refugee families in Egypt amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

The generous contribution from Sawiris Foundation will support 2,673 refugee households identified by UNHCR as highly vulnerable as a result of COVID-19. The partnership, launched this month and running through November 2020, secures monthly cash grants to refugees currently in dire need of support to make ends meet, having lost their livelihood due to the pandemic and have either been or are at risk of being evicted.

This is the first partnership between UNHCR and Sawiris Foundation, who normally fund economic empowerment and educational programs for the most marginalized Egyptians.

"Sawiris Foundation has been actively empowering the most disenfranchised Egyptians for 19 years since its founding, through access to top notch education and job opportunities. We have been quick to respond during the COVID outbreak to support families most impacted in these difficult times. Our Board recognizes the importance of including refugees in Egypt in our plans as they are certainly amongst the most vulnerable populations. We are certain that through this collaboration we can give some hope and needed assistance to these families," said Eng. Samih Sawiris, SFSD Founding Member and member of its board of trustees.

"UNHCR's multi-purpose cash assistance programme is a means of protection and livelihood support to refugees and asylum-seekers unable to meet their basic needs such as rent, hygiene, health, education, food and other household expenses. We are very grateful for the generosity of Sawiris Foundation and greatly appreciate that together we can provide lifeline support to these families, who otherwise may not be able to cope with their destitute situation," said Karim Atassi, UNHCR Egypt Representative.

Sawiris Foundation's donation comes in response to an appeal for USD 10.2 million UNHCR Egypt has made to address the impact of COVID-19. With additional funding, UNHCR would be able to expand its cash programme to reach more refugees in need, support refugee access to primary and secondary healthcare, expand access of refugee children to distance learning and ensure protection services for marginalized groups are maintained.

While the wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers remains at the center of its prevention and response efforts, UNHCR also stands in solidarity with the Egyptian people and continues to coordinate with and support the ongoing efforts of the Egyptian Government to curb the spread of COVID-19.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people.

UNHCR has been working in Egypt since 1954 after the Government of Egypt and UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Within the framework of this MOU,

UNHCR provides protection services including registration, documentation, refugee status determination and resettlement to persons of concern. For more than six decades, the office provided assistance to stateless individuals from Armenian and European origins, followed by large influxes of African, Iraqi and Syrian refugees in subsequent decades.

### **Oman announces fines for companies violating COVID-19 precautions**

Oman's Ministry of Manpower has issued a set of conditions for private firms to deal with the coronavirus and set fines of up to OMR 500 (\$1,300) for violations, as new coronavirus cases spiral in the Sultanate.

The Ministry of Health in Oman reported 905 new cases of COVID-19. According to the ministry, among the affected, 402 were Omanis while 503 were non-Omanis. So far, a total of 29,471 cases have been reported in the Sultanate.

The Ministry of Manpower and the competent authorities are responsible for controlling private sector establishments in case of any violations of the decisions issued by the Supreme committee. The top notifications from the ministry include:

Private companies should display awareness posters in various languages at the workplace or will have to face a fine of OMR 100. A fine of OMR 300 for the absence of an emergency plan to limit the spread of COVID-19.

OMR 100 fine for not wearing masks and providing a hand sanitizer, OMR 100 for not having a thermometer, and OMR 100 in the absence of signs of social distancing at the work site or workers' residence. OMR 500 fine in the absence of a special record for workers suspected of being infected with the virus.

OMR 500 fine in the absence of security guards to monitor and record the entry and exit of workers and visitors from the workers' residence.

### **Saudi wealth fund PIF building stake in UK's BT Group: The Telegraph**

Saudi Arabia's \$325-billion Public Investment Fund (PIF) seems to be on a buying spree amid the pandemic. National British daily The Telegraph has reported that the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund is building a stake in BT by buying shares on the open market.

According to the report, three sources close to BT said that the PIF has been buying up shares on the open market in recent weeks.

Both companies declined to comment to the Telegraph.

### **Egypt operates flights to return 1,400 citizens from Lebanon**

Exceptional flights will be operated over three consecutive days to transport 1,400 Egyptian citizens stranded in Lebanon, Shorouk News cited the Middle East News Agency (MENA).

The eight flights will return the citizens on June 3rd, 4th, and 5th, being operated after the Egyptians requested to return home following the spread of COVID-19 in Lebanon which led to an economic crisis.

Egypt's Ambassador to Lebanon Yasser Olwi told MENA that 4,000 Egyptian citizens in Lebanon received food supplies on a regular basis to help them during the crisis.

Olwi noted that the Egyptians did not pay any cost for their journey to homeland.

On June 2nd, the African country returned 1,155 of its citizens from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Air traffic in Egypt has been suspended since March 19th, in a way to curb the outbreak of the virus.

### **Educational institutions in UAE likely to reopen in**

### **September with restrictions**

The Education and Human Resources Council, at a meeting chaired by H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, was briefed on the Ministry of Education's plan and vision on the possibility of re-opening educational institutions across the country.

During the meeting, Hussain bin Ibrahim Al Hammadi, Minister of Education, said that the possibility of resuming study in general educational institutions, including re-opening of public and private universities and schools, will be in next September and according to precautionary measures and depending on assessment of evolving changes related to corona virus, COVID-19, as per health requirements issued by competent authorities.

The possibility of re-opening of educational institutions will take place as per a well-studied plan and within the precautionary measures taken by the UAE to contain the virus, which place the health and safety of students at a top priority, the minister added.

### **Over million expats to leave Saudi market in 2020: report**

About 1.2 million expat workers could leave the Saudi labour market by the end of 2020, according to a recent research note by Jadwa Investment.

Sectors, including accommodation and food services, administrative and support activities will most likely see the highest share in expat departures.

Global working hours are set to slide by 10.7% or 305 million full-time workers over the second quarter (Q2) of 2020 when compared to Q4-19, affected by the lockdown measures imposed around the world since the beginning of Q2 as the coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

However, the final number of annual job losses will depend on the development of the pandemic and the measures taken to lessen its impact.

The Jadwa report further expects the Saudi unemployment rate to remain unchanged at around 12% by the end of 2020.

As Saudi employees were encouraged to work remotely since mid-March and then stopped going to work in line with the social distancing rules, the report says that between 35% to 65% of total labour in the kingdom have stayed home over Q2-20. A situation that has led or will lead several companies to institute temporary salary cuts, terminate contracts particularly for foreign labour, or enrol Saudi workers into the Sanad scheme.

Introduced in 2014, the Sanad fund will bear 60% of Saudi employees' salaries in the private sector for three months with a total value of SAR 9 billion.

Since the beginning of 2020, approximately 323,000 workers have already departed Saudi Arabia, based on health insurance coverage of expats.

Moreover, the ILO unveiled a policy framework with four key pillars to combat COVID-19, namely stimulating the economy and employment, supporting enterprises, jobs, and income; protecting workers in the workplace, and relying on social dialogue for solutions and other measures.

It is worth pinpointing that Saudi Arabia provided a SAR 120 billion stimulus package for the private sector and reallocated 5% of the 2020 budget into the most affected sectors, such as health.

In addition, the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA) pumped SAR 50 billion to support the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), whilst the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) provided SAR 5 billion to support Saudis' employment and subsidise wages of those employed in the private sector since July 2019.

## India's Glenmark launches COVID-19 drug at 1.35 per tablet

Tablets of Avigan (generic name : Favipiravir), a drug approved as an anti-influenza drug in Japan and developed by drug maker Toyama Chemical Co, a subsidiary of Fujifilm Holdings Co. are displayed during a photo opportunity at Fujifilm's headquarters in Tokyo October 22, 2014. Japan's Fujifilm Holdings Corp said it was expanding the production of its Avigan anti-influenza drug to reach an additional number of Ebola patients. France and Guinea plan to conduct clinical trials of Avigan 200 mg tablets, made by Fujifilm group company Toyama Chemical Co, in Guinea to treat Ebola in mid-November, Fujifilm said in a statement.

Indian drug firm Glenmark Pharmaceuticals has launched anti-viral drug Favipiravir, under the brand name FabiFlu, for the treatment of patients with mild to moderate COVID-19 at a price of about Rs 103 (\$1.35) per tablet.

According to the largest news agency in India, PTI, the drug will be available as a 200mg tablet at a maximum retail price of Rs 3,500 (\$45.88) for a strip of 34 tablets.

FabiFlu is the first oral medication that has been approved in India for the treatment of COVID-19, it added. Reuters

## Spain reopens its borders

Covid-19 has now killed over 467,000 people worldwide since the outbreak emerged in China last year, according to tracking websites. Here are the developments for June 21:

UK to unveil lockdown easing plans

Britain will outline its plans to ease the lockdown this week, health minister Matt Hancock said, potentially relaxing the two-metre rule on social distancing, allowing many businesses to reopen in early July.

Many employers, especially in the hospitality and leisure sectors, have said the rule that people must remain two metres apart will prevent them from being able to operate as lockdown measures are lifted.

"This week we will announce further details of the measures we can take to relieve some of the national lockdown measures at the start of July, including on July 4."

Asked if the two-metre rule would be amended in the plans to be announced this week, he said: "I very much hope that we can."

He said there were mitigations to allow people to be closer than two metres while limiting the risk of spreading the virus and they would set out details about how businesses could comply.

He said it was possible people would have to register their details before going to a pub or a restaurant.

Indonesia reports 862 new infections, 36 new deaths  
Indonesia reported 862 new infections, taking its total number of cases to 45,891.

Health ministry official Achmad Yurianto said there were 36 more deaths reported, with total fatalities now at 2,465, the highest coronavirus death toll in East Asia outside of China.

Russia reports fewer than 8,000 new cases

Russia lately reported 7,728 new cases, pushing its nationwide case tally to 584,680 since the crisis began.

The national coronavirus response centre said that 109 people had died in the last 24 hours, bringing the official death toll to 8,111.

Spain reopens its borders

Passengers wearing masks and wheeling suitcases arrived at Madrid's main airport as Spain opened its borders to most European countries and ended a state of emergency imposed to contain the virus.

Spain's borders are now open to all European Union countries except Portugal, as well as Schengen Area members outside the bloc and Britain in a much-needed boost to the country's tourism industry which accounts for more than 12% of the economy.

Spaniards were also allowed to move freely around the country from Sunday and many were expected to visit friends, relatives and second homes in other regions.

## Pakistan to reopen border with Afghanistan

Pakistan says it will reopen a key border crossing with Afghanistan to allow trade between the neighbors.

Trucks carrying fruits, vegetables and other items will start crossing the Ghulam Khan border in northwestern North Waziristan district.

Pakistan has already reopened its border with Iran.

Pakistan reported 119 more Covid-19 deaths and 4,951 new cases, raising its total to 176,617 cases including 3,501 fatalities.

Pakistan put its entire population of 220 million in lockdown in March, but the government last month eased restrictions, saying it was necessary to save the economy even though cases went up.

## Coronavirus resurgence continues in South Korea

South Korea continues to struggle to contain a resurgence that has seen some of the country's hard-won pandemic gains erased since social distancing rules were eased in mid-April.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 48 new Covid-19 cases, bringing the national caseload to 12,421 infections, with 280 deaths.

The agency says 24 of the new cases are in the Seoul region, which has been the center of the country's outbreak since late May. Ten of the new cases, however, are from the central city of Daejeon, indicating the virus is beginning to spread more broadly.

Some experts say the country should reimpose stronger social distancing guidelines, but officials are reluctant to do so in fear of hurting an already fragile economy.

## Australia's Victoria extends state of emergency as cases surge

Australia's second most populous state, Victoria, extended its state of emergency for four more weeks to July 19, as it battles a spike in coronavirus infections with a pick-up in community transmission. The move came a day after the state announced it would reimpose restrictions capping visitors to households to five people and outdoor gatherings to 10, starting Monday. The limits had been relaxed to allow 20 people in households and public gatherings on June 1. Victoria reported 19 new infections on Sunday, the fifth day of double digit-rises.

The state has now had 1,836 total confirmed cases, or a quarter of the cases in Australia, since the Covid-19 pandemic erupted.

Germany's confirmed cases rise by 687 to 189,822

The number of confirmed cases in Germany increased by 687 to 189,822, data from the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases showed. The Institute also reported a death toll of 8,882. The figure stood at 8,883. No explanation was given why the number in Sunday's tally decreased by one.

## China reports 26 new cases

Mainland China reported 26 new confirmed coronavirus cases, down from 27 a day earlier, driven largely by the latest outbreak of Covid-19 in the Chinese capital.

Of the new infections, 22 were in Beijing, the National Health Commission said in a statement, the same as a day earlier.

The city of more than 20 million people reported its first case in the latest wave on June 11. The resurgence has been linked to a wholesale food centre in the southwest of Beijing. So far, 227 people in the city have been infected in the latest outbreak.

## Mexico reports 4,717 new infections

Mexico reported 4,717 new infections and 387 additional deaths

from the coronavirus, the health ministry said, bringing the total number in the country to 175,202 cases and 20,781 deaths. The government has said the real number of infected people is likely significantly higher than the confirmed cases.

### **Brazil fatalities inch towards 50,000**

Nearly 50,000 people have died from the coronavirus in Brazil, the world No. 2 hotspot, with 1,022 fatalities in the last 24 hours, the Health Ministry said. A total of 49,976 people have officially died from COVID-19 in Brazil, according to the ministry, with a total of 1,067,579 confirmed cases. Only the United States has recorded more deaths and cases. Brazil confirmed its first case of the novel coronavirus on February 26 and passed 1 million cases lately.

### **South Africa reports nearly 5,000 new cases**

South Africa has reported 4,966 new confirmed cases of coronavirus over the past 24 hours, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 92,681, the Health Ministry announced. "Regrettably, we report a further 46 Covid-19-related deaths – 11 from Eastern Cape, 3 from KwaZulu Natal and 32 from Western Cape provinces. This brings the total deaths to 1,877," Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said in a statement.

### **Palestinian Authority to temporarily close Hebron, Nablus**

The Palestinian Authority announced it was temporarily closing the cities of Hebron and Nablus in the occupied West Bank for after a sharp rise in infections.

Only goods will be allowed in, Palestinian prime minister Mohammed Shtayyeh told journalists. Authorities have reported a total of 687 cases in the West Bank, including two deaths so far. Source: TRTWorld and agencies

### **Iraq demands Turkey 'stop bombardment, withdraw forces' from North**

Baghdad demanded Ankara immediately halt its assault in northern Iraq, where Turkish special forces and helicopters have been targeting Kurdish rebel hideouts.

Turkey launched a cross-border operation into the mountainous regions of northern Iraq where the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), considered by Ankara to be a "terrorist" group, is thought to be hiding out.–AFP

### **Iran Doctor freed in swap for navy veteran returns to Tehran**

An Iranian doctor based in Florida returned to his homeland lately after being part of a swap that saw a U.S. Navy veteran held by Iran return to America.

The semiofficial Fars news agency published an image of Matteo Taerri being greeted at Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport by Foreign Ministry officials and his family. The agency and state television identified Taerri by his Persian name, Majid.

Taerri, a dermatologist, had been charged with attempting to export a filter to Iran that he said was for vaccine research but that U.S. authorities said required a license because it could be used for chemical and biological warfare purposes. He was also accused of structuring a series of bank deposits below \$10,000 to evade reporting requirements under federal law.

He pleaded guilty late last year and has already served months behind bars. But in April, he was permitted to be free on bond after the Justice Department withdrew its request to have him detained, citing what it said were significant foreign policy interests.

Fars quoted Taerri as calling his charges "futile and unfair." Taerri reportedly said he tried to send the filter to Iran to help scientists at Tehran University manufacture a cancer vaccine, without elaborating.

Iran allowed Michael White, of Imperial Beach, California, to leave the country. He was detained in July 2018 while visiting a girlfriend in Iran. He was convicted of insulting Iran's supreme leader and posting private information online.

White was released from prison in March on a medical furlough that required him to remain in the country in the care of the Swiss Embassy in Tehran, which represents America's interests in Iran.

Earlier last week, an Iranian scientist named Sirous Asgari returned to Tehran after being acquitted in a federal trade secrets case and deported. Asgari's departure had been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic, and his supporters say the scientist contracted the virus while being held.

The White-Taerri swap comes after months of quiet diplomacy, even as the U.S. under President Donald Trump continues a maximum-pressure campaign targeting Iran after unilaterally withdrawing from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers in May 2018.

The two countries had been locked in a series of escalating incidents, including the U.S. drone strike killing an Iranian general in Baghdad and an Iranian ballistic missile attack targeting American troops in Iraq.

Other Westerners and Iranians with ties abroad have been detained by authorities in the country, likely to be used as bargaining chips in negotiations. Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Jaber Ansari, on hand for the airport ceremony, said Iran had "mobilized" its potential to release other Iranians in the U.S., without elaborating. —AP

### **Libya government says retakes Haftar's last redoubt in West**

Libya's UN-recognised government announced another victory in its counter-offensive against eastern-based strongman Khalifa Haftar, overrunning his last western stronghold Tarhuna, launchpad of an abortive 14-month assault on the capital.

The recapture of the strategic town southeast of the capital capped a week that already saw the Government of National Accord reestablish control over the whole of Greater Tripoli, including the abandoned civilian airport on its southern outskirts.

"Our heroic forces have extended their control over the whole of Tarhuna," said GNA spokesman Mohamad Gnounou.

"Our heroic forces have full control of Greater Tripoli right up to the city limits," Gnounou announced.

GNA head Fayez al-Sarraj vowed that his government would impose its control over the whole of Libya.–AFP

### **Turkey says it hits 500 Kurdish militant targets in northern Iraq**

Turkish forces have hit more than 500 Kurdish militant targets in northern Iraq as part of an operation in the region against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the Defence Ministry said.

Turkish warplanes struck PKK targets in various regions of northern Iraq on Sunday and Tuesday in two separate raids, which Ankara said were in response to an increase in militant attacks on Turkish army bases.

Ankara launched the "Claw-Tiger Operation" on Tuesday in northern Iraq's Haftanin region.

A Defence Ministry statement said Turkish F-16 jets, drones and howitzers had hit and destroyed more than 500 PKK targets in 36 hours.

"The Claw-Tiger Operation is going very well. God willing, by continuing with the same seriousness and determination, we will conclude the operation with success," the statement cited Defence Minister Hulusi Akar as saying.

Turkey regularly attacks PKK militants, both in its mainly Kurdish southeast and in northern Iraq, where the group is based. It has also warned in recent years of a potential ground offensive against PKK bases in Iraq's Qandil mountains.



**Meeting online is the new norm:** 11th OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting was held via videoconference (source: OPEC)

## Market Rebalancing in Focus

OPEC says that market rebalancing, full commitment to conformity remain the focus

**T**he 11th OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting was held via videoconference, on Saturday, 06 June 2020, under the Chairmanship of HRH Prince Abdul Aziz Bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Energy, and co-Chair HE Alexander Novak, Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation.

The Meeting reaffirmed the continued commitment of the participating producing countries in the 'Declaration of Cooperation' (DoC) to a stable market, the mutual interest of producing nations, the efficient, economic and secure supply to consumers, and a fair return on invested capital.

The Meeting also recalled the decision

taken by all Participating Countries in the DoC at the 10th (Extraordinary) OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting on 12 April 2020 to adjust downwards overall crude oil production.

The Meeting noted additional adjustments from Saudi Arabia (1 mb/d); the UAE (100 tb/d); Kuwait (80 tb/d) and Oman (10-15



tb/d) in June; the announcements of voluntary adjustments from several countries, such as Norway and Canada; as well as various oil company statements revising downward production plans and shutting in supply.

The Meeting underscored how the production adjustments in May, alongside the emergence of many economies from the lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, have helped garner tentative signs of a recovery in the global economy and oil market.

However, the Meeting emphasized that it was vital that DoC Participants, and all major producers, remain fully committed to efforts aimed at balancing and stabilizing the market. In this regard, it was noted that global oil demand was still expected to con-

tract by around 9 mb/d for the whole of 2020.

In view of the current fundamentals, and following the agreement reached at the 179th Meeting of the OPEC Conference, all Participating Countries:

- Reconfirmed the existing arrangements under the April agreement.
- Subscribed to the concept of compensation by those countries who were unable to reach full conformity (100 per cent) in May and June, with a willingness to accommodate it in July, August and September, in addition to their already agreed production adjustment for such months.
- Agreed the option of extending the first phase of the production adjustments pertaining in May and June by one further month.
- Recognized that the continuity of the current agreement is contingent on them fulfilling elements 1 and 2 above.

Agreed without dissent that the full and timely implementation of the agreement remains inviolable, based on the five key elements, and endorsed the 'Statement on the Declaration of Cooperation,' which is annexed to this Press Release.

The Meeting also called upon all major oil producers to proportionally contribute to the stabilization of the oil market, taking into consideration the substantial effort made by the OPEC and non-OPEC Participating Countries of the DoC.

In order to observe the fair, timely and equitable implementation of the above, the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) was requested to closely review the general energy market conditions and related factors, oil production levels, and conformity levels with the DoC, assisted by the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) and the OPEC Secretariat.

One week later, the 19th Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) was held via videoconference, on Thursday, 18 June 2020, under the Chairmanship of HRH Prince Abdul Aziz Bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Energy, and co-Chair HE Alexander Novak, Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation.

The Committee reviewed the monthly report prepared by the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) and recent developments in the global oil market, as well as immediate prospects for the remainder of 2020 and into 2021.

The JMMC reiterated the critical role that the 'Declaration of Cooperation' (DoC) continues to play in supporting oil market stability and economic recovery, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic shock and the subsequent severe global economic downturn. In this regard, it recalled the historic decision taken by all Participating Countries

in the DoC at the 10th (Extraordinary) OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting on 12 April 2020 to adjust downwards overall crude oil production, and the decisions taken at the recent 179th Meeting of the OPEC Conference and the 11th OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting on 6 June 2020. This included extending the first phase of the production adjustments by a further month, now till 31 July 2020, and subscribing to the concept of compensation by those countries who were unable to reach full conformity (100%) in May and June, to accommodate the underperformed volumes in July, August and September, in addition to their already agreed production adjustment for such months.

The Committee took note of the overall conformity of 87% for the month of May 2020. It also observed individual country conformity levels and reiterated the critical importance that all Participating Countries achieve their 100% level, and make up for any monthly shortfalls in the months of July, August and September. It welcomed the expressed commitments from those countries below the 100% May conformity level and specific compensation plans highlighting how this will be accommodated, and delivered, between July and September.

The Committee then emphasized the critical importance of adhering to full conformity, and compensating the overproduced volumes in the months of May and June, during the months of July, August and September 2020, in accordance with the Statement of the 11th OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting of the DoC (6 June 2020), in particular with reference to the five elements agreed.

The Committee thanked those participants, namely Iraq and Kazakhstan, which have already submitted their compensation schedules, and agreed to give other underperforming participants, which have not yet submitted final plans, until next Monday 22 June 2020 to submit their schedules for compensation to the OPEC Secretariat.

Furthermore, the Committee mandated the Secretariat to reach out to all the underperforming Participating Countries to submit their schedules for compensation by the above mentioned date.

The Committee also stressed that the attainment of 100% conformity from all Participating Countries is not only fair and equitable, but vital for the ongoing and timely rebalancing efforts and helping deliver a sustainable oil market stability.

The Committee stated their appreciation of additional voluntary contributions totaling 1.2 mb/d made by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Oman in the month of June 2020.

## CMA Instructs Insurance Companies to Include Coronavirus in the Insurance Cover of the Insured

The Capital Market Authority (CMA) is launching a new motor insurance service in Oman

**T**he Capital Market Authority (CMA) is launching an e-service to determine the value of a vehicle in a total loss, i.e. reduced to a wreck.

The service now available to the stakeholders of the Omani insurance market, speeds up the claim settlement process.

Motor insurance is the second biggest class of business in the Sultanate with 26.7% of underwritten premiums which in 2019 amounted to 129.8 million OMR (336 million USD) for 95.5 million OMR (247 million USD) of incurred losses.

HE Sheikh Abdullah Salim Al Salmi, Executive President of the CMA has commended the role insurance companies play and their quick response with tangible and earnest steps of solidarity with the community and the economy in the light of the exceptional circumstances in Oman and worldwide to confront the coronavirus epidemic such as the national initiative of insurance companies to take part in the confrontation of the epidemic, curb its spread and to mitigate the consequence as part of the procedures taken by the Supreme Committee tasked with dealing with developments of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Executive President of the CMA said that a number of insurance companies have contributed to the fund for support of the health services (Waqf Fund) which aims to provide healthcare. HE praised the initiative of the insurance companies to cover the costs of medical tests and treatment of the insured individuals who are infected with the coronavirus as additional initiative to the efforts of the Supreme Committee which is highly responsible and professional response in line with the instructions of the CMA within the cooperation of all the institutions of the community adding that such initiative would reflect positively in mitigating the pressure on the government health institutions and the financial burden on the Government to face the epidemic.

Al Salmi said in statement to the media that the role insurance companies playing represents the real goals of the insurance sector in taking the required measures to protect the community from the risks and the consequent financial damage. Furthermore,

such role and presence of the insurance sector reflects the readiness and compliance of the sector to accommodate the changes and events the Omani community and economy is witnessing to lessen the resultant consequences which could result from such unexpected developments which is one of the key goals of the both the conventional and Takaful insurance sector.

Al Salmi said that despite the stance of the insurance in the current event of epidemic and in the events of exceptional weather conditions in the past years and recurrence of such events highlights the need to create means of mitigation of the impact of such events on the economy, the community and the Government. In this regard CMA is considering establishing a fund for "Calamities" to compensate the risks which are not covered by normal insurance such as epidemics (COVID-19) or compensation of those who have no insurance coverage resulting from such calamities which is a custom procedure in many countries.

HE continued his talk about the role of the insurance sector in confronting the coronavirus breakout pointing out that the CMA has taken a number of precautionary measures since the beginning of the crisis including measures to curb the spread of the disease and other relating to mitigating the consequences of the precautionary measures on investment activities. He said insurance companies were instructed to pay all the financial dues to the providers of health services in the hospitals, polyclinics and clinics to support the continuation of their services so as not to impact their cash flows due to the epidemic and precautionary measures which led to closure of a number of private health institutions and specialized clinics further to precautionary measures such as reducing the number of visitors to the institutions to continue providing the service. CMA and the Ministry of Health have taken measures to ensure cash flows for such institutions to continue providing the service through continued coordination.

Al Salmi expressed his pleasure with the constructive cooperation of the insurance companies in the provision of the services remotely and employing the technology to



provide the insurance service. He added the sector succeeded in providing the service remotely via various electronic means to ensure continuation of the service for the people, the economy and the community in general which enabled the customers to obtain the insurance service regardless of their places and locations which contributed to avoiding many risks resulting from unavailability of insurance for expired policies during the breakout such as motor insurance, health insurance and properties insurance etc.

With regard to the endeavors to upgrade the insurance services Al Sami pointed out that the CMA's decision issued in September 2016 approving the guide for improving the quality of the insurance services rendered by insurers had an excellent impact and contributed to enhancing the competition between insurance companies to provide quality services and upgrade them to better levels through focusing on enhancing customer service culture and coping with state of the art customer service technology which resulted in the companies' readiness in dealing with the coronavirus outbreak and the sector was a model example in dealing with the crisis. On the financial position of the insurance companies Al Sami said the audited financial statements shows, with continued follow up, that they enjoy good financial solvency enabling them to deal with such crisis and discharge their obligations toward policyholders which add great confidence in the financial efficiency of the Omani financial sector generally as the insurance sector is one of the key financial





sectors in the times of crisis.

Al Salmi added that the insurance sector is not isolated from the other financial sectors as regards the adverse impact of the coronavirus breakout in addition to the economic consequences resulted from the sharp drop in oil prices which their impact is obvious on all economic activities as new offerings are expected to decrease as well as delays in receiving and dues from the customers which would impact their liquidity if the situation continue.

HE the Executive President confirmed the importance of insurance companies working urgently on setting appropriate strategies for the requirements and challenges of the current phase through reducing expenses and improving the quality of the services they render employing technology and practical policies and measures for risk management and redrawing their investment policies and underwriting policies in their insurance portfolios. He added there are continued follow up with all the constituents of the sector to achieve stabilization and enhanced competition for the benefit of stakeholders especially policyholders.

It is noteworthy that the audited financial statements of the insurance sector in 2019 show gross direct premiums have increased by 5% to RO 486.5 at the end of 2019 compared to RO 463.5 at the end of 2018. The sector data shows that the average growth in gross premiums in the past five years was 4%. The number of insurance companies licensed to operate was 20 in addition to Oman Reinsurance Company. There was more than 35 insurance brokers at the end

of 2019 beside 145 insurance agents.

Unaudited financial data of the insurance sector for the first quarter of 2020 revealed that total investments of insurance companies were about RO 686.5 million increasing by 2.8% compared to the first quarter of the previous year. National insurance companies recorded RO 529.6 million and foreign insurance companies RO 257.2 million. The data shows that investments of national insurance companies were concentrated in the Sultanate at 90% while investments of foreign insurance companies were about 10% and they invested 82% inside the Sultanate in cash instruments, bank deposits, government and corporate bonds. Investments of foreign insurance companies abroad were 18%.

The data indicates that cash instruments, bank deposits, listed bonds and shares and real estate were the majority of the investments. Cash instruments and bank deposits were RO 278.5 million at 64.8% of the total investments of national insurance companies and RO 162.8 million at 63.3% of the total investments of foreign insurance companies.

The data showed that total investments inside the Sultanate increased in the first quarter of 2020 by 1% compared to the previous year. Investments in investment funds, government and corporate bonds increased the by 59.4%, 32.2% and 13.8% consecutively compared to the first quarter of 2019. Investments in listed shares and loans guaranteed by life insurance, cash and bank deposits have decreased.

Investments abroad decrease in the first

quarter of 2020 compared to the previous year by 4.5%. Investments in cash, bank deposits and life guaranteed loans were the highest investment schemes at 94% and 2.1% consecutively while other investment schemes have decreased by 1.3% and 35.5%.

Dhofar Insurance has the biggest share in the investments in the first quarter with total investments at RO 74.467 million followed by Axa Insurance with total investments at RO 69.486 million and Oman United Insurance in the third place with total investments RO 63.287 million followed by National Life and General Insurance with total investments RO 56.027 million. It is noteworthy that these four insurers have 38% of the total investments in the sector in the first quarter of 2020.

Investments of national insurance companies were concentrated in cash and bank deposits. The data shows that national insurance companies have invested in cash and bank deposits about 64.8% of their total investments inside the Sultanate and abroad. Al Ahilya Insurance was the biggest investor in cash and bank deposits at 94% of its total investments while National Life and General Insurance has the lowest investments in cash and bank deposits among the national insurance companies at 36% of its total investments. Foreign insurance companies invested 63.3% of their investments inside the Sultanate and abroad in cash and bank deposits schemes. Orient Insurance and Iranian Insurance invested 100% of their investments in these schemes while Life Insurance had the lowest investments in these scheme at 40%.

# Robust 2019 Results to Drive Business Through 2020

ICIEC saw an increase of more than 28% over the previous year in total intra-OIC business, having insured a total of USD 5.4 billion, involving 36 member countries



**Continuing ICIEC strong business performance:** Oussama Kaissi, Chief Executive Officer of ICIEC

**T**he Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC) has released its Annual Report and financial statements for 2019, upon approval from its Board of Governors on 29 May 2020.

The Corporation, a member of the Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDBG), has once more demonstrated its resilience through a year of general volatility. Despite 2019 being marked by the intensification of trade tensions, political instability, and weak global growth, the Corporation raised its business insured by 20% to reach

USD 10.86 billion - the highest in the past decade. Over its 26 years of existence, ICIEC has cumulatively insured more than USD 64 billion in support of global trade and investments.

Based on its performance, ICIEC has maintained, for the 12th consecutive year, an Aa3 rating by Moody's - which is one of the strongest in the Export Credit and Political Risk Insurance industry.

The Corporation saw an increase of more than 28% over the previous year in total intra-OIC business, having insured a total of USD 5.4 billion, involving 36

member countries. These results contribute to the OIC's goal of reaching a 25% intra-OIC trade share by 2025.

Releasing the 2019 Annual Report, the Chief Executive Officer of ICIEC, Oussama Kaissi, expressed optimism at the Corporation's prospects for 2020, stating "We are well positioned to weather the effects of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and continue our strong business performance as a direct result of the robust pipeline developed in 2019".

Kaissi went on to say, "These results demonstrate ICIEC's growth and continued commitment to delivering on its mandate of supporting trade and investment in our 47 member countries - assisting in their economic development, diversification and prosperity. Considering the significant growth, our Corporation is on track to reach its 2019-2020 Business Plan targets for business insured".

ICIEC attributes the impressive 2019 results to various operational initiatives, including: underwriting improvements, risk management and technical reserving practices, a strong commitment to continuous professional development, as well as our partnership with international players in the industry.

The Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC) is a member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group. ICIEC was established in 1994 to strengthen the economic relations between member countries of the OIC. ICIEC's vision is to be recognized as the preferred enabler of trade and investment for sustainable economic development in Member Countries. Its mission is to facilitate trade and investment between member countries and the world through the provision of Shariah compliant risk mitigation tools and financial solutions.

# JB Boda Group-The Future is Globally Local

Rohit Boda leads the J.B. BODA Group's 3rd Generation from aspirations to global achievements and thus continuing the legacy of J.B. Boda's incredible journey



**Leading the J.B. BODA Group from aspirations to achievements:** Rohit Boda, Managing Director at J.B. Boda

**T**he J. B. Boda Group (The Group) was founded by Late Chairman Jagmohandas Bhagwandas Boda, together with his brother, Late Dhirajlal Bhagwandas Boda, way back in 1943, when they set out from the small coastal town of Porbandar (Gujarat State) to Mumbai, the commercial hub of India, to start "Reinsurance Broking" operations.

J.B. BODA has completed 77 years as integral part of thousands of lives and has evolved over the years as a truly global group.

J.B. Boda's Lloyd's accredited firm has an office network across India and two separately capitalized companies in London, established in 1986, and a 40-strong Singapore location, set-up in 1981.

J.B. BODA Group Continue to grow as a PREFERRED GLOBAL BRAND through quality, integrity, consistent service and add value to meet expectations of our clients.

Rohit Boda, Managing Director at J.B. Boda Group leads the J.B. BODA Group from ASPIRATIONS to ACHIEVEMENTS

Rohit Boda, told InsuranceAsia News: "As the demand for niche segments surge and with changing times during and post-pandemic, we will be looking to add skilled technicians across all the group companies – be it insurance and reinsurance broking or survey work in the country."

Rohit Boda adds: "The main focus areas for us will be a specialization on analytics, reinsurance actuarial services and assisting the client with pricing methodologies." Boda also wants an emphasis on technical analysis, policy wordings and clauses.

GIC Re, Boda says, is helping overall rates in the country to increase and has stipulated certain minimum rates on a set of professions and this has led to pricing improvement. And according to the Insurance Regulatory Development Authority, fire insurance has shown growth of 36.2% up to March 2020 compared with the previous year.

The plan is to "grow the horizon" in the economies where it foresees "a future and a good insurance growth for the next

decade, to start with, India."

The firm is looking at expanding in China and has started to undertake placements for US-based local insurers in the last five years with the Asian market.

Prakash Rao, chief executive and managing director at JB Boda Singapore, has helped sign Vinod Krishnan, former regional Chief Executive of Aon Benfield and JLT Re, to head up the firm's reinsurance drive in the region.

Reinsurance broking requires the touch of a local flavour and with offices across all the continents, clients can learn and adapt policies and products from other regions," Boda's Managing Director explicates.

The firm is also aiming to expand and open new offices in the Africa where the firm has been carrying out treaty and facultative broking since 1965. It recently hired an agronomist to focus on agriculture and livestock business in its Kenyan operations. The broker has also expanded its team in Dubai and Nairobi for life and health reinsurance broking.

Rohit Boda reflects how Covid-19 has placed a new focus on life and health insurance, particularly with growing healthcare costs across the globe. He cites this as an opportunity and has been in discussions with several AI companies who can assist partners with underwriting and claims for health cover.

In the Middle East, JB Boda wants to grow traditional and specialist lines such as credit, extended warranty and parametric products.

Expanding relationships through partner brokers across the world is also part of the expansion plan.

The definition of 'risk' has taken a completely new dimension with the changing dynamics and the introduction of new products and distribution channels and innovation to the existing ones which surges interest of the masses to look at insurance for salvaging the financial peril," Rohit Boda points out.

Rohit explains how Covid-19 has placed a new focus on life and health insurance, particularly with growing healthcare costs across the globe. He believes this is as an opportunity for further growth.

## Bupa to Increase stake in Bupa Arabia to 43.25%

**B**upa, the international health insurer and provider, proposes to further increase its stake in Bupa Arabia by 4% to 43.25%. This follows an agreement to acquire a portion of Nazer Group's stake in Bupa Arabia. Bupa is now submitting formal applications to the relevant Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) authorities for the customary regulatory approvals.

Bupa and Nazer Group first formed a partnership in 1997 and Bupa Arabia was established in 2008. Bupa Arabia has since grown to become the leading health insurance provider in the KSA.

The KSA is a market with rising customer demand for high quality healthcare funded by private health insurance, and Bupa has incrementally increased its shareholding of this successful business over recent years. The increase in Bupa's shareholding is in line with Bupa's strategy of investing to strengthen its existing market positions to deliver sustainable growth.

Bupa Group CEO, Evelyn Bourke



**Bupa to further increase its stake in Bupa Arabia by 4% to 43.25%:** Evelyn Bourke, Group CEO, Bupa

said: "Bupa Arabia is a long-standing and high-performing part of our organisation. We are increasing our shareholding in recognition of its continued success and our ongoing commitment to meeting the rising healthcare needs of customers in the KSA. We look forward to continuing to serve the KSA market, in partnership with Nazer Group."

Chairman of Bupa Arabia and Founder and Chairman of Nazer Group, Loay Hisham Nazer, added: "We are very proud of the achievements and success of Bupa Arabia, underpinned by a great partnership between Nazer and Bupa. This serves as an example of how Saudi companies can attract the highest quality of foreign investors who bring expertise to the market, while benefiting from the local knowledge of the Saudi partner. Our commitment to Bupa Arabia remains very strong. I am committed to stay on as Chairman, and Tal Nazer is committed to serve as CEO."

## AM Best Affirms Credit Ratings of Orient Insurance and Orient Takaful Insurance Co.

**A**M Best has affirmed the Financial Strength Rating of A (Excellent) and the Long-Term Issuer Credit Ratings of "a+" of Orient Insurance PJSC (Orient) (United Arab Emirates) and Orient Takaful Insurance Company (S.A.E.) (Orient Takaful) (Egypt), a subsidiary of Orient. The outlook of these Credit Ratings (ratings) is stable.

The ratings reflect Orient's balance sheet strength, which AM Best categorises as very strong, as well as its very strong operating performance, neutral business profile and appropriate enterprise risk management.

Orient's balance sheet strength is underpinned by risk-adjusted capitalisation at the strongest level, with Best's Capital Adequacy Ratio (BCAR) scores comfortably above 50% at the 99.6% confidence level. The group's balance sheet strength is supported by its prudent reserving practices

and strong liquidity position. The majority of capital consumption arises from the group's investment portfolio, which includes a material strategic equity holding that accounted for approximately 22% of total invested assets at year-end 2019. The investment continues to create some volatility in Orient's capital and surplus, owing to fair value movements. However, Orient's capital buffers to date have been sufficient to absorb these fluctuations. In addition, the group has access to risk mitigation tools to dilute the potential impact of a material adverse fair value movement.

The group has a track record of consistently outperforming its peers in terms of underwriting and overall profitability, which has been largely free of material fluctuations despite severe competition and regulatory changes in the UAE market. Orient continues to demonstrate very strong operating performance, as

evidenced by the excellent five-year (2015-2019) weighted average combined ratio and return on equity of 77.8% and 13.0%, respectively. AM Best expects that Orient's prudent approach to risk selection and focus on profitability over top-line growth will support continued strong technical performance.

Orient's solid business profile in the UAE, derived from its strong brand and control over its distribution network, assisted the group in maintaining a leading market position. Orient's business profile continues to benefit from its multichannel distribution network and affiliation with the Al-Futtaim group. AM Best expects Orient to increase its penetration in the UAE's life insurance segment and continue to develop its regional presence in line with the Al-Futtaim group's expansion where feasible.

# AM Best Downgrades Credit Ratings of Milli Reasurans Turk Anonim Sirketi

**A**M Best has downgraded the Financial Strength Rating (FSR) to B (Fair) from B+ (Good) and the Long-Term Issuer Credit Rating (Long-Term ICR) to “bb+” from “bbb-” of Milli Reasurans Turk Anonim Sirketi (Milli Re) (Turkey). The outlook of these Credit Ratings (ratings) has been revised to stable from negative.

The ratings reflect Milli Re’s consolidated balance sheet strength, which AM Best categorises as strong, as well as its adequate operating performance, neutral business profile and appropriate enterprise risk management.

The rating downgrades reflect the deterioration in recent years of Milli Re’s balance sheet strength assessment, taking into consideration the increased

levels of political and financial system risk in Turkey.

At year-end 2019, Milli Re’s consolidated risk-adjusted capitalisation was at the very strong level, as measured by Best’s Capital Adequacy Ratio (BCAR). Capital requirements relate largely to underwriting risk, driven by the business written by Milli Re’s subsidiary, Anadolu Anonim Turk Sigorta Sirketi (Anadolu). The balance sheet strength assessment benefits from Milli Re’s conservative investment portfolio by asset class, although investment quality is constrained by exposure to high levels of financial system risk in Turkey. The consolidated balance sheet is also subject to potential volatility from Milli Re and Anadolu’s domestic catastrophe exposure.

Milli Re has a track record of strong investment earnings, which have underpinned a five-year weighted average return on equity of 16% (2015-2019) and reflect in part high inflation in Turkey. Underwriting results have been poor over the same period, demonstrated by a five-year weighted average combined ratio of 108%. AM Best expects Milli Re’s prospective operating performance to remain adequate, despite pressure on overall earnings stemming from falling interest rates in Turkey.

Milli Re has a strong market position in Turkey as the only locally domiciled, privately owned reinsurer. In addition, the company’s profile benefits from its ownership of Anadolu, which is a market leader in the country’s direct insurance market.

## Swiss Re Corporate Solutions Announces Collaboration with LocalTapiola

**S**wiss Re Corporate Solutions announces a strategic agreement to bring LocalTapiola onto its International Programme Administration (IPA) platform.

Additionally, the agreement gives the Finnish insurer access to Swiss Re Corporate Solutions’ network of over 150 local offices and network partners. The collaboration supports LocalTapiola’s ambitions to grow its corporate business book by competing as lead for international programme business.

Swiss Re Corporate Solutions’ state-of-the-art IPA platform software enables LocalTapiola to manage and deliver structured and compliant multinational programmes to its corporate customers. IPA allows for efficient policy issuance, information management and knowledge exchange from a single online platform.

LocalTapiola will also use ONE Form, Swiss Re Corporate Solutions’ globally standardised property policy. ONE Form is embedded in the IPA platform, thus

automating local policy issuance. As a result, LocalTapiola’s corporate customers will benefit from higher policy accuracy, increased contract certainty and faster processes.

This collaboration builds on the existing business relationship between LocalTapiola and the Swiss Re Group.

“Our collaboration with LocalTapiola marks a new milestone on our journey to advance the insurance industry,” stated Andreas Berger, CEO Swiss Re Corporate Solutions. “Enabling other insurers – and their customers – to benefit from our digital International Programme

Administration platform underlines our ambition to simplify complex international programme delivery through technology.”

Jari Sundström, Managing Director at LocalTapiola General Mutual Insurance Company, said: “Together with Swiss Re Corporate Solutions, we are able to offer for our corporate clients a reliable way to have accurate and compliant insurance

policies reflecting the needs of over 150 international markets through a single point of contact.” With IPA, Swiss Re Corporate Solutions offers insurers, brokers and broker networks an innovative Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platform to support international programme structuring. In October 2019, the company entered its first collaboration with the global broker network Brokerslink. Swiss Re Corporate Solutions will continue to develop the IPA platform as an open market standard.

Swiss Re Corporate Solutions provides risk transfer solutions to large and mid-sized corporations around the world. Its innovative, highly customised products and standard insurance covers help to make businesses more resilient, while its industry-leading claims service provides additional peace of mind. Swiss Re Corporate Solutions serves clients from offices worldwide and is backed by the financial strength of the Swiss Re Group. For more information about Swiss Re Corporate Solutions.

# Lebanese Insurers Cover COVID-19

Lebanese insurance market: Decrease in figures 2019

**C**OVID-19 Since the beginning of the pandemic and until 11 March 2020, only the Lebanese government was supposed to cover the hospitalization fees of patients with COVID-19.

Following that date, several insurers took the initiative to cover the risk and a government decision has subsequently bound insurance companies to cover the costs related to epidemics, including that of COVID-19.

Consequently, all new contracts underwritten or renewed after 15 April 2020 shall include this type of coverage.

AM Best is a global credit rating agency, news publisher and data analytics provider specializing in the insurance industry. Headquartered in the United States, the company does business in over 100 countries with regional offices in New York, London, Amsterdam, Dubai, Hong Kong, Singapore and Mexico City.

According to the forecast data published by Byblos Bank, the Lebanese insurance market will total a turnover of 1.63 billion USD in 2019, declining by 5% compared to 2018.

The life activity accounted for 30.2% of premiums, that is 492 million USD,

against 31.7% in 2018. Non-life premiums represented 69.8% of the total turnover against 68.3% a year earlier.

The insurance penetration rate stood at 2.9% of GDP in 2019, slightly decreasing compared to the 3.1% of GDP achieved in 2018. Insurance density is also declining as it dropped from 353 USD at the end of 2018 to 336 USD by late 2019, that is a 4.8% decrease over one year. Allianz SNA remains the market leader.

It is followed in decreasing order by Bankers Assurance, MetLife ALICO, Fidelity Assurance & Reinsurance and AXA Middle East. Legislative

## Carte Assurances: Electronic Signature at the Heart of Digitalization Strategy

**C**arte Assurances is introducing the electronic signature. The concept was developed by NG SIGN, a company licensed by

the Agence Nationale de Certification Electronique (ANCE).

The use of electronic signature is an innovation that will boost the digitaliza-

tion of the customer service process.

## STAR: Distribution of a Dividend Worth 3.820 TND Per Share

**T**he Annual General Assembly of the Société Tunisienne d'Assurances et de Réassurances (STAR) will be held on 30 June 2020 at LAICO Hotel, Tunis.

The Board of Directors will be proposing to the shareholders the distribution of a dividend of 3.820 TND (1.36 USD) per share for the financial year 2019, to be fully distributed.

For the record, STAR, the leading company in the local market, closed the year 2019 with a net profit of 22 million TND (7.852 million USD).

## FTUSA: Online Two-Wheeler Insurance Application

**I**n order to digitalize its services, the Tunisian Federation of Insurance Companies (FTUSA) dedicates a web space for the insurance applications of motorcycles and scooters.

The owners of two-wheeled vehicles with a power of less than 50cm<sup>3</sup> can

now submit their applications on the website: <http://ftusanet.org/demandeurune-assurance-moto/>.

All the documents required for the application (sales contract or purchase invoice, copy of the ID or passport) are to be provided in digital form.

For the record, the two-wheeler insurance application procedure had already been simplified in 2016 as FTUSA had ceased to physically connect the insurers with the insured.

# Mourning Dr. Azza Arfeen - IFE

The Insurance Federation of Egypt and its Board of Directors and employees mourn the dearest colleague and instructor Mrs. Azza Arfeen , the executive director and senior advisor of Insurance Federation of Egypt since 2018

Insurance Federation of Egypt



الاتحاد المصري للتأمين

With profound sorrow...  
 With love and appreciation for everything  
 she has done...  
 The Board of Directors of Egyptian Federation  
 of Insurances and its members mourn the dearest  
 colleague and instructor Mrs. Azza Arfeen, the  
 executive director and senior advisor of  
 Insurance Federation of Egypt since 2018.  
 The company also had a great role in the  
 Egyptian Insurance Sector for more than 27  
 years from her career began in 1971.



The Board of Directors and its members have decided to  
 take leave of absence for Mrs. Azza Arfeen for 30 days  
 from her work from 1/10/2020 to 31/10/2020.  
 The Board of Directors also expressed its sympathy to  
 her family and its members and its appreciation for the  
 generation of workers.  
 She goes and did not hold back... she died and did not  
 hold.  
 With deepest sympathy we are saying farewell to one of  
 the Egyptian insurance sector pioneers...  
 We will miss to bless you with the absence of its rolling  
 presence in the insurance sector...  
 Amman

Chairman of Insurance Federation of Egypt  
 Akad: Elshaykh

نحن أهلاً، وبأسى  
 نعلن الحداد بإنذارنا على ما فعلته  
 بغير الأمان لعجوزي القاسم بطلبها إذ لم تكن  
 العاطف، بل الحبيبة القاسم، والوفاء، والأمانة العجوزة  
 العجوز، العجوز العجوزي، التي بدأنا في اتحاد التأمين  
 العجوز منذ عام 1971.  
 الشركة التي كانت تلعب الدور العجوزي بطلبها العجوزي  
 27 عاماً من حياتها، من عام 1971.

المجلس الذي اجتمع عليه من قبلها، من عام 1971، إلى اليوم، والخدمة العجوزة  
 العجوزة التي عملت في العجوزية من قبلها من قبلها من  
 العجوزة التي اختارتها أخيراً من العجوزة العجوزة في اتحاد التأمين  
 العجوز من قبلها.

العجوز، وبأسى... العجوز، وبأسى...

بها ما فعلته من واتحاد التأمين العجوزي...

نحن أهلاً، وبأسى... العجوز، وبأسى... العجوز، وبأسى...  
 العجوز

رئيس اتحاد التأمين العجوزي

د. العجوزي

# Swiss Re Appoints Thierry Léger as Group Chief Underwriting Officer

Swiss Re appoints Thierry Léger as Group Chief Underwriting Officer, announces changes to Life Capital Business Unit



**Announcing changes to Life Capital Business Unit:** Thierry Léger, Group Chief Underwriting Officer

Swiss Re announced the appointment of Thierry Léger as the Group Chief Underwriting Officer, effective 1 September 2020. He succeeds Edi Schmid, who has decided to step down from the Group Executive Committee for personal reasons and take on an advisory role.

Swiss Re's Chairman Walter B. Kielholz said: "On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to thank Edi Schmid for his dedication and an enormous contribution to Swiss Re over nearly three decades. We are grateful that he will continue to share his expertise and knowledge with the Group in an advisory capacity. We are also pleased that Thierry Léger has accepted this new challenge after achieving many milestones during his time at the

Life Capital Business Unit. His expertise in underwriting, technology, data and innovative solutions will be a big asset in furthering the development of Swiss Re's leading position in underwriting."

Edi Schmid has been the Group Chief Underwriting Officer and member of the Group Executive Committee since July 2017. He joined Swiss Re in 1991 and has since held a number of important roles, such as Head Property & Specialty Reinsurance, Head Property & Casualty Risk and Actuarial Management, and Chief Risk Officer Corporate Solutions.

Thierry Léger has been leading the Life Capital Business Unit, which combines Swiss Re's ReAssure, elipsLife and iptiQ businesses, since its creation in January 2016. He joined Swiss Re as an engineer-

ing underwriter in P&C in 1997, before moving to Swiss Re New Markets in 2001, providing non-traditional solutions to insurance clients. Between 2003 and 2005 he was a member of the executive team in France. From 2006, Thierry Léger assumed increasing responsibility for Swiss Re's largest clients, developing risk and capital solutions, and ultimately becoming the Head of the Globals Division in 2010 and a member of the then existing Group Management Board. In 2013, he assumed the role of the Head of Life & Health Products Reinsurance.

Following the completion of the sale of ReAssure to Phoenix Group Holdings plc, which is expected for the third quarter of 2020, the Life Capital Business Unit will be disbanded. This process is expected to be concluded by the end of December 2020. Effective 1 September 2020, the CEO Life Capital will no longer be a member of the Group Executive Committee.

Subject to applicable regulatory approvals, elipsLife, which provides life and health insurance solutions and services for corporate clients, will move to Corporate Solutions at the end of September 2020, allowing it to better leverage this Business Unit's relationships with corporates and brokers. Swiss Re's white-labelling digital insurance platform iptiQ will become a standalone division reporting to the Group CEO, effective 1 January 2021, enabling a greater focus on this business. Swiss Re continues to assess the further streamlining of the legal entity structure of the Group.

Swiss Re's Group Chief Executive Officer Christian Mumenthaler said: "The changes announced will position Swiss Re well for the next chapter of the Group's strategic development. Having grown dynamically over the past years, iptiQ is on track to becoming a leading player in its field. And being part of Corporate Solutions will open further growth opportunities for elipsLife. In underwriting, we will continue to evolve our capabilities through cutting-edge research, access to more and better data and advanced analytics."



# Swiss Re Highlights COVID-19-Related Emerging risks and Trends

Swiss Re's SONAR report highlights COVID-19-related emerging risks and trends, says current crisis shouldn't overshadow need to move to low-carbon future

Intergenerational tensions, supply chain disruptions and the fragility of public healthcare are among the risks and trends amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 SONAR report says.

- The coronavirus outbreak showed that societies weren't sufficiently prepared, and that broad risk awareness is crucial for proper risk management; SONAR contributes by flagging emerging risks and fostering dialogue

- The current crisis shouldn't overshadow the need for the world to transition to a more sustainable economy and a low-carbon future, and the insurance industry can play a pivotal role in this

- The report discusses new and changing risks in the context of long-term macro trends and turbulent times; specific topics highlighted include increased cyber risk from so-called edge computing, the boom of e-cigarettes and the lack of long-term experience with new and more sustainable building materials

New risks and trends accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic are emerging, but the current crisis shouldn't overshadow the need for the world to transition to a more sustainable economy and a low-carbon future, the new Swiss Re Institute's SONAR report says.

The recession caused by the containment measures to curb the coronavirus outbreak is exacerbating longer-term structural problems, such as an increased pressure on intergenerational social contracts and disruptions to supply chains.

While older generations turned out to be more vulnerable in the pandemic, millennials struggle with high unemployment and debt from education spending – putting to test the solidarity between generations. Measures such as the widespread lockdowns are causing drug shortages among other supply chain problems, and at the same time, the COVID-19 crisis is exposing the fragility of many of the world's public health systems and the need for better risk management.

The 2020 SONAR report, published, aims to inspire risk dialogue and foster risk awareness within society and the insurance industry, a key step for

adequate risk management.

"After this global crisis, which shows the importance of forward-looking risk management, society will need to adapt to many changes, some of which will continue to linger on," said Patrick Raaflaub, Swiss Re's Group Chief Risk Officer. "As a risk knowledge company, it is our duty to raise awareness about new risks we pick up on the horizon and to continue to build resilience also in these unprecedented times."

The pandemic experience will continue to prompt shifts in the political landscape, regulatory environment and in market dynamics, the SONAR report said. It will also bring about a refocus in priorities, as the world moves toward planning its economic recovery.

A more sustainable future post COVID-19

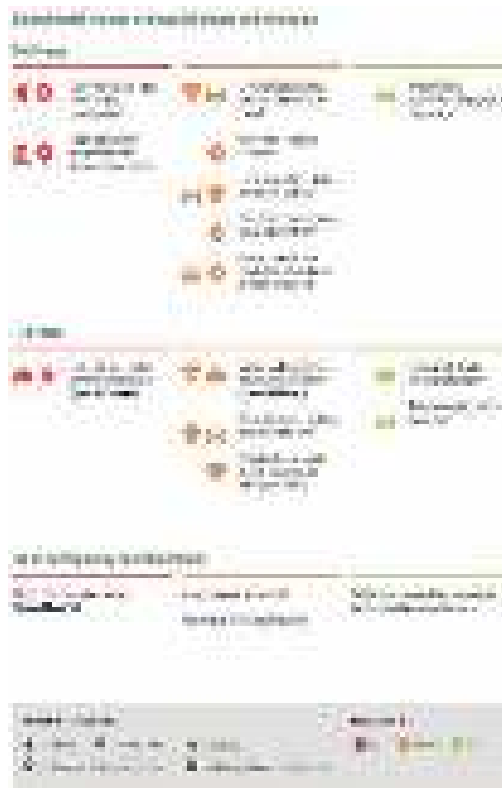
The COVID-19 containment measures and lockdowns may have eased pollution for a brief moment, but they will not put a halt to global warming, the report said. Therefore, the transition to a net-zero economy, where sustainability is firmly embedded in economic recovery strategies, is key.

Once the world moves out of crisis stage and toward some form of postpandemic norm, the public and private sectors must focus on both global health and climate change, the SONAR report said. A transition to a low carbon economy presents many opportunities, but also new risks for the insurance industry, including from carbon removal schemes.

The road map to net-zero

As a starting point, all sectors of the economy need to limit and reduce emissions as much as possible, in particular the transport, agriculture and building industries. Greenhouse gases that remain need to be removed from the atmosphere through biological or technical means and then be permanently stored.

According to most climate models,

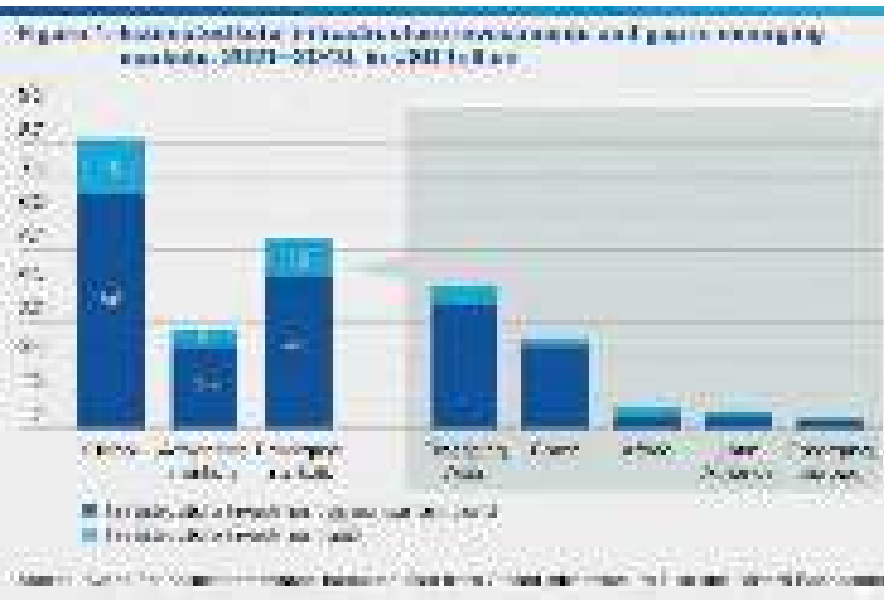


lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions together with decisive carbon removal are needed to limit global warming to well below 2°C from pre-industrial levels. To reach that target, the carbon removal industry would need to grow to the size of the current oil & gas industry by 2050.

While the carbon removal industry is still in its infancy and its scalability is yet to be proven, the estimated growth would bring a wealth of opportunities for insurance.

The transition to a low-carbon economy requires political, technological and behavioral change. Finding new ways to cope with the required changes calls for innovation and offers new opportunities for business across different sectors, and in all core areas of insurance, including in risk knowledge and risk transfer as well as investment. The insurance industry can play a pivotal role by providing specialist risk transfer knowledge and capacity to partners in other sectors of the economy.

# Infrastructure Investment: A Key Driver of Growth in Emerging Markets Post COVID-19 crisis



Investment in infrastructure development is set to be one of the main drivers of sustainable growth in the emerging markets after the COVID-19 crisis subsides, the latest sigma says. Emerging markets will invest USD 2.2 trillion in infrastructure annually over the next 20 years, equal to 3.9% of gross domestic product (GDP), according to estimates in the report. The energy sector, in particular renewable energy, smart and resilient infrastructure, and healthcare facilities are expected to attract strong investment. The sigma estimates that emerging market infrastructure represents an annual investment opportunity of USD 920 billion for long-term investors, including insurers. The construction and operational phases of infrastructure projects will also generate new demand for insurance solutions, with engineering, property and energy lines of business set to benefit most.

“Spending on infrastructure could be one of the ways to kickstart parts of the economy after the COVID-19 pandemic and help drive strong and sustainable growth over the next decade,” said Jerome Jean Haegeli, Group Chief Economist at Swiss Re. “Most infrastructure spending will be in emerging Asia, which we also expect to be the engine of global economic growth.”

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, many emerging markets had already put multi-year infrastructure projects into motion, and the associated investments are not expected to drop off to the same extent as seen

in previous crisis. Infrastructure investment to be a key driver of growth in emerging markets post COVID-19 crisis, sigma says. The pandemic has also shown the urgent need for more investment in health infrastructure in many emerging markets.

Beyond the recession shock inflicted by the COVID-19 pandemic, emerging markets are forecast to grow by around 4.4% annually over the next decade, slower than the yearly average of 5.5% in 2010-19, but much faster than the projected 1.8% growth in advanced markets. In the aftermath of the pandemic, the global economy will face headwinds from impaired supply chains and production capacities, higher unemployment, bankruptcies and higher debt burdens. And, given the already weak resilience of many economies before the onset of the crisis, global growth will return to subdued levels only. Against this backdrop, emerging markets need to become more resilient by improving productivity and increasing investment in infrastructure, which in turn can reduce businesses’ operating costs and create an enabling environment for new capital formation and output growth.

“The realities of today, including an increasingly pervasive digital technology, the clear impact of climate change and the need to build more resilient societies, will increase demand for, and shape the direction of, infrastructure development in emerging markets,” Haegeli said.

Based on current spending trends and

economic growth forecasts, sigma estimates that the largest share of the estimated investment in emerging markets will be in energy infrastructure (34%), with a core focus on renewable energy. As many countries increase their efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, investment is expected to pivot toward smart and resilient infrastructure – in which data and digital technology come together to improve monitoring and managing of connected networks such as public transport, utilities and waste disposal systems, as well as facilities like power stations and grids. Building and upgrading of existing infrastructure to become more resilient to climate change impacts will also be a key area of sustainable investment.

The sigma estimates that total infrastructure investment in emerging Asia will average USD 1.7 trillion annually over the next 20 years, or 4.2% of GDP and USD 35 trillion in total (see Figure 1).

“In the coming years, Asia will invest more in infrastructure than anywhere else in the world, with the region’s emerging economies accounting for more than a third of associated spend,” said Russell Higginbotham, Swiss Re Chief Executive Officer Reinsurance Asia. “Critically, infrastructure will enable sustainable growth by fostering improved productivity; while rising incomes and a continuing trend of urbanisation will mean that the composition of infrastructure needs will also evolve.” China will invest an estimated USD 1.2 trillion (4.8% of GDP) each year, accounting for 35% of global investment in infrastructure and 54% of all emerging market investment in infrastructure. India will be the second largest infrastructure investment market, accounting for around 8% of all emerging market spend. Africa will invest an estimated 4.3% of GDP in infrastructure, but the absolute levels will be low. Emerging Europe will invest 3% of GDP in infrastructure, in line with the global average, but spending in Latin America will lag at 2.3% of GDP. Figure 1 also shows that in spite of the spending, the estimated investment will not fully cover the needs of the next 20 years. The infrastructure gaps in all emerging regions together will accumulate to USD 520 billion annually. In relative terms, the gap is largest in Africa and Latin America, and smallest in emerging Asia.

# نقدم لك حلول مبتكرة



[www.qgirco.com](http://www.qgirco.com)

[info@qgirco.com](mailto:info@qgirco.com)



A volunteer ties a mask onto an Egyptian man in a street in the Egyptian capital Cairo

# Egypt: Health Care Workers Forced to Make Impossible Choice Between ‘Death or Jail’

Egyptian health care workers express safety concerns and criticize the government’s handling of the COVID-19 crisis

**T**he Egyptian authorities must immediately stop their campaign of harassment and intimidation against frontline health care workers who express safety concerns or criticize the government’s handling of the COVID-19 crisis, Amnesty International said latey.

The organization documented how Egyptian authorities have used vague and overly broad charges of “spreading false news” and “terrorism” to arbitrarily arrest and detain health care workers who speak out and have subjected them to threats, harassment and punitive administrative measures.

Those targeted by the authorities have denounced unsafe working conditions, personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages, insufficient infection control training, limited testing of health care workers, and lack of access to vital health care.

Amnesty International conducted 14 interviews with doctors, their relatives, lawyers and syndicate members, and reviewed supporting evidence, including written correspondence and voice messages from public officials.

“Instead of protecting frontline health care workers by addressing their legitimate concerns over their safety and livelihoods, the Egyptian authorities are handling the COVID-19 crisis with their usual repressive tactics. Health care workers have to make an impossible choice: risk their lives or face prison if they dare to speak out,” said Philip Luther, Amnesty International’s Research and Advocacy Director for the Middle East and North Africa

“Health care workers in Egypt have been arrested, criminalized and prosecuted

simply for daring to express their personal safety concerns and, in some cases, have been denied access to adequate health care. Officials have often hailed health care workers as Egypt’s ‘white army’ for bravely fighting at the frontlines to protect people’s health, but apparently with the expectation that they will do so in silence.”

According to Egypt’s Doctors Syndicate, at least 68 frontline health care workers died and more than 400 tested positive since the outbreak of the coronavirus in Egypt in mid-February. This number does not include doctors who died with COVID-19 symptoms, such as pneumonia, who did not undertake the PCR tests. It also excludes the death toll of nurses, dentists, pharmacists, technicians, delivery workers, cleaning staff and other essential workers who are also on the frontline and have risked their health and wellbeing to ensure that people are able to access health care and other essential services.

Protecting their life or liberty?

Amnesty International has documented the cases of eight health care workers, including six doctors and two pharmacists, who were arbitrarily detained between March and June by the notorious National Security Agency (NSA) for online and social media posts expressing their health-related concerns.

The NSA arrested Alaa Shaaban Hamida, a 26-year-old doctor, on 28 March at the hospital where she works in Alexandria, after a nurse used her phone to report a case of coronavirus to the health ministry’s hotline. According to Alaa’s statement during the prosecution’s investigation, the director of El Shatby University Hospital in Alexandria reported her to the NSA for

bypassing his mandate by reaching out directly to the ministry. NSA officers then arrested her from the hospital director’s office. Alaa, who is pregnant, is currently held in pre-trial detention on charges of “membership in a terrorist group”, “spreading false news”, and “mis-using social media”.

On 10 April, security officers arrested an ophthalmologist, Hany Bakr, 36, from his home in Qalyubia, north of Cairo, for a Facebook post in which he criticized the government for sending medical aid to Italy and China.

On 27 May, another doctor was detained for writing an article criticizing the government’s response to COVID-19, as well as the structural gaps in Egypt’s health system. According to his family, four security officers raided his home, confiscated his phone and laptop, and asked him if he attended the burial of Walid Yehia who died after contracting the virus.

On 14 June, the doctors’ syndicate released a statement warning that such detentions were creating “frustration and fear among doctors”.

On 25 May, a group of doctors at Al-Mounira hospital submitted their resignations, stating that a lack of training and PPE kits and “the arbitrary decisions [of the health ministry] in relation to [administering] PCR tests and isolation measures” may have contributed to the death of their colleague Walid Yehia, 32, a doctor who contracted the virus and was unable to get a bed for more than two days at a quarantine hospital in Cairo. According to several sources, NSA officers visited Al-Mounira hospital to pressure the striking doctors to retract their mass resignations. The

health ministry's investigation into his death, acknowledged an "administrative failure" but limited responsibility to the hospital alone.

Arrests for raising concerns about the health system predate COVID-19. In September 2019, five doctors were arrested for launching the "Egypt's doctors are angry" campaign which called for reforming the healthcare system in Egypt and preventing further 'brain drain.' While four of the doctors were subsequently released, dentist Ahmad al-Daydamouny is still behind bars for views he expressed online about poor remuneration and working conditions, and inadequate health facilities.

#### Security and administrative threats

Amnesty International has also spoken to seven doctors who witnessed security and administrative threats against their health worker colleagues for complaining on social media or requesting the health ministry to provide health care workers with PCR tests, PPE, training, and access to health care in cases of contracting the virus.

A source from the Doctors Syndicate confirmed that doctors are being subjected to threats, interrogations by the NSA, administrative questioning, and penalties. He said: "We are receiving a lot of complaints in that regard, while many others are preferring to pay for their own personal equipment to avoid this exhausting back and forth. They are forcing doctors to choose between death and jail." The NSA is represented in the "COVID-19 crisis committees" established across the country, further confirming the government's security-based approach of addressing a public health crisis.

Some health workers have expressed concerns for their safety. Doctors interviewed shared with Amnesty International several threatening voice messages they received from district health officials or hospital managers. The voice messages flagrantly threaten doctors who don't report to work with referral to the NSA which could lead to prosecutions, or proceedings that could lead to salary deductions. In one such message, a doctor who has refused to work [for lack of safe working conditions] is described as "[a] traitorous soldier" who deserves to "suffer the most severe penalties".

A written letter signed by the North Sinai governor, seen by Amnesty International, warns: "Any doctor or nurse who refuses to perform their work or is absent from work will be summoned by the NSA."

Sources from the Doctors Syndicate told Amnesty International that health care workers who speak out have been transferred to isolation hospitals where

patients who have contracted COVID-19 are quarantined, or to hospitals in other governorates. This is especially concerning for doctors with pre-existing medical conditions or older doctors who are at greater risk.

For example, following a video posted by a doctor in the Central Hospital in Deyerb Negm requesting personal protective equipment, the health ministry deputy in Sharqia governorate referred him to the health ministry's legal committee for questioning and transferred him to another hospital as a form of punishment.

Pharmacists have also faced abuse and harassment for criticizing the authorities. In response to a complaint from eight women pharmacists in relation to their unsafe working conditions at Damanhour Medical National Institute, the hospital director decided on 9 May to transfer them to different governorates far from their homes and families.

"Amnesty International is calling on the Egyptian authorities to put an immediate end to their campaign of harassment and intimidation against health care workers who are speaking out. The campaign not only further undermines freedom of expression in the country, but also hampers the efforts of those tackling the health crisis and puts their and others' lives in danger," said Philip Luther.

It is important to note that The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved US\$400 million to support Egypt's transformational Universal Health Insurance System (UHIS) as the country's pathway toward achieving universal health coverage (UHC) and improving the health outcomes of its citizens. The project will support the Government of Egypt (GOE) to put in place the building blocks of the Universal Health Insurance System; to roll the system out in Phase I Governorates; and to offer temporary financial protection to the most vulnerable across the country to protect them from high out-of-pocket health expenditures resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak.

"Expanding health care services is a national priority for the Government of Egypt. The Universal Health Insurance project with the World Bank encompasses mandatory coverage for citizens and unifies, for the first time, efforts with the private sector. The project aims at achieving value care services, including to the most vulnerable, by eliminating existing disparities," said Minister of International Cooperation Dr. Rania Al-Mashat.

Egypt's Universal Health Insurance Law (UHIL) guides the implementation of the Universal Health Insurance System

and accelerates progress toward Universal Health Coverage in line with the health pillar of Egypt's 2030 Sustainable Development Vision. The law envisions mandatory coverage for all citizens in the country, including vulnerable groups who will be subsidized by the government.

"We are pleased to partner with the World Bank to support Egypt's universal health insurance system, which will help Egyptians access affordable health care they need without suffering financial hardships. The Project will support Egypt to achieve long-term stability in health financing with less dependence on state budget and less exposure to economic fluctuations," said Minister of Finance Dr. Mohamed Maait.

The project is also complementary to the World Bank-financed COVID-19 Emergency Response Project that aims to support the immediate operational challenges and critical areas of support identified as key gaps in Egypt's national COVID-19 response.

"Our support will help Egypt increase its coverage of the Universal Health Insurance System (UHIS) in six governorates, strengthen UHIS-related governance and institutions, and also provide temporary financial protection against high out of pocket health expenditures for vulnerable populations across the country," said Marina Wes, World Bank Country Director for Egypt, Yemen, and Djibouti.

The UHIS is expected to complement and contribute to Egypt's focus on improving human capital. As an early adopter of the World Bank's Human Capital Project, the GOE has committed to the 'whole of government' approach to build, protect, and utilize human capital. The UHIS will contribute to building human capital through investing in early years of life and providing better health care, antenatal care, and targeted childhood stimulation.

Over the years, the World Bank has strengthened its engagement in Egypt's health sector, including the Transforming Egypt's Healthcare System Project, which was launched in September 2018 to help improve health service delivery in Egypt. The Project supported the screening of 52 million citizens for Hepatitis C and Non-Communicable Diseases; provided ongoing treatment for 2.2 million patients, in addition to supporting the improvement of quality of care in 600 Primary Health Care facilities and 30 tertiary hospitals; trained and contracted 2,800 community health workers; boosted demand- and supply-side interventions for family planning programs; and provided advanced nucleic acid testing for public blood supply.

مخاوفك نحن نهتم بها  
Leave your worries to us.

## **Peter Hugger and Marc Maupoux join Saudi Re**

Peter Hugger and Marc Maupoux are joining Saudi Re's Board of Directors for a three-year term starting in 2020.

A former chairman and CEO of Echo Re (Zurich), Peter Hugger has a very diversified experience in the reinsurance market, mainly in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

He has also held management positions with ACR, Singapore, MSG Systems Group and Gerling Global Re, Zurich. Marc Maupoux equally has a rich background in reinsurance. He created and managed a start-up in Zurich after working at Axis Re Europe and Hannover Re.

## **Al Baraka Islamic Bank Offers Sukuk-based Murabaha Financing Facility**

Al Baraka Islamic Bank and Bahrain Bourse signed an agreement allowing the Bank to buy and sell Shariah-complaint Ijara Sukuk through Bahrain Bourse, which will contribute to facilitating the Bank's financing operations for its underlying clients.

The agreement aims to diversify the commodities available for underlying clients when conducting a commodity-based Murabaha transaction to include government-based Sukuk (issued by the Central Bank of Bahrain).

This service aims to provide significant reductions in processing time for the bank, and is playing a growing role in the expansion and position of Bahrain as a hub for shariah-complaint financing.

On this occasion, Tariq Kazim, General Manager – Business Group at Al Baraka Islamic Bank - Bahrain expressed his great pleasure in signing the cooperation agreement with the Bahrain Bourse. This agreement aims at enhancing the Bank's role in investing in government leasing sukuk, which will expand the investor base in these sukuk on the one hand, and diversifies the sources of financing these issues on the other hand. This will enable the Bank also to play a greater role in providing financing to clients who can use the proceeds from the sale of these sukuk to finance their needs. He expressed his thanks and appreciation to Bahrain Bourse, the Central Bank of Bahrain and Bahrain Clear for arranging for this fruitful cooperation.

On his part, Sh. Khalifa Bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa – Chief Executive Officer of Bahrain Bourse commented: We are pleased to welcome Al Baraka Islamic Bank utilize the Murabaha platform, as this will help the bank expand its Sharia'a-compliant solutions and will diversify services provided by Bahrain Bourse. Further, the service aims to offer unique advantages



**Offering Sukuk-based Murabaha Financing Facility:** Tariq Kazim, General Manager – Business Group at Al Baraka Islamic Bank

to Al Baraka Islamic Bank and its customers with Sharia'a-compliant solutions and trading opportunities to meet their growing needs and further position the Kingdom of Bahrain as a hub for Sharia-compliant transactions.

## **Aramex launches "Aramex SMART-Unbox First. Pay After." to boost e-commerce growth across its core markets**

ARMX), a leading global provider of comprehensive logistics and transportation solutions, lately announces the launch of "Aramex SMART", an innovative and comprehensive delivery, payment and returns solution for e-tailers that enhances consumers' online shopping experience, increases payment optionality and delivery flexibility, and promotes the overall growth of e-commerce industry in the region.

"Aramex SMART" is the world's first all-in-one stack delivery, payment and returns solution offered by a logistics and transportation company. It enables e-tailers around the world to deliver a premium experience for their shoppers in Aramex's core markets. Consumers that use this solution benefit from a convenient online shopping experience which gives them access to fast deliveries, easy returns, and allows them options to complete their payments within a period of 14 days after the delivery of their shipment, using a payment method of their choice.

Commenting on the launch, Bashar

Obeid, Chief Executive Officer of Aramex, said: "The launch of 'Aramex SMART' is a milestone not only for Aramex, but for the entire e-commerce industry as it brings together a full stack of delivery, payment and returns solution in a single offering. As one of the leading industry players, part of our strategy is to continuously improve the ecosystem by identifying gaps and coming up with innovative solutions to help resolve bottlenecks that will ensure a healthy and uninterrupted growth of e-commerce. With 'Aramex SMART' we aim to support businesses that wish to grow their online sales channels, and improve the online shoppers' overall experience, especially during the current unprecedented challenges brought by COVID-19. Through the launch of this innovative solution, we aim to boost growth in the digital economy and support resurgence in retail demand."

## **Another delay To Oman's Dhamani Plan**

Oman's compulsory private health insurance Dhamani was due to begin in 2019 and was delayed. The next due date was mid-2020. A new delay due to the global pandemic means that the official line is that it will begin in late 2020. But the reality is that insurers do not expect it to start until 2021.

Dhamani is for employees of the private sector, residents, and visitors to Oman.

The rollout of Oman's mandatory universal health insurance for private



## البنك الإسلامي الأردني يفوز بجائزة التميز في مجال المسؤولية المجتمعية للمصارف الإسلامية (التزام) لعام 2020



المسؤولية المجتمعية للمصارف الإسلامية: الدكتور حسين سعيد الرئيس التنفيذي المدير العام للبنك الإسلامي الأردني

فاز البنك الإسلامي الأردني بجائزة التميز في مجال المسؤولية المجتمعية للمؤسسات المالية والمصارف الإسلامية (التزام) لعام 2020 على مستوى قطاع المصارف الإسلامية في المنطقة العربية من قبل الشبكة الإقليمية للمسؤولية الاجتماعية عضو برنامج الأمم المتحدة لاتفاق العالمي، وذلك للدور المتميز للبنك تجاه المجتمع وتعزيزه للممارسات المسؤولة وتحقيق التنمية المستدامة والتميز في مجال الصيرفة الخضراء وعكسها على بيئة العمل. وقد أعلن البروفيسور يوسف عبد الغفار رئيس مجلس إدارة الشبكة الإقليمية للمسؤولية الاجتماعية مدير عام المركز العالمي للتنمية المستدامة عن فوز البنك الإسلامي الأردني بهذه الجائزة خلال عقد فعاليات مؤتمر وجائزة المؤسسات المالية والمصارف الإسلامية الخامس للشراكة والمسؤولية المجتمعية لعام 2020 الذي عقد عبر تطبيق «الزوم» بتاريخ 11/6/2020. متمنياً المزيد من النجاحات للبنك أملاً أن تكون هذه الجائزة دافعاً قوياً لدى المؤسسات المالية الأخرى للاستفادة من تجربة البنك للمضي في تعزيز وموائمة الممارسات المصرفية لتحقيق مفهوم التنمية المستدامة الخضراء. وعن هذه الجائزة عبر الدكتور حسين سعيد الرئيس التنفيذي المدير العام للبنك الإسلامي الأردني عن سعاداته واعتزازه بالإنجازات التي يحققها البنك باستمرار مؤكداً على نجاح سياسة النهج والاستراتيجية التي ينفذها البنك لتحقيق التنمية المستدامة ودمجها في العمل المصرفي الإسلامي. قامت الشبكة الإقليمية للمسؤولية الاجتماعية بإعادة منح البنك الإسلامي الأردني لهذه الجائزة التي سبق ان حصل عليها عن العام 2017، مما يدفع البنك لبذل المزيد من الجهود لتحقيق نجاحات أخرى في مجال المسؤولية الاجتماعية والتنمية المستدامة والتحول الكامل للصيرفة الخضراء، لتكون تجربة البنك الإسلامي الأردني في هذا المجال رائدة ومتميزة كما هي إنجازاته الدائمة على مختلف الصعد. وجاء عقد هذا المؤتمر بتنظيم الشبكة الإقليمية للمسؤولية الاجتماعية وبالتعاون مع المركز العالمي للتنمية المستدامة والاتحاد الدولي للمسؤولية المجتمعية وبالشراكة الاستراتيجية مع مجموعة البركة المصرفية وبمشاركة ورعاية من البنك الإسلامي الأردني، وتناول موضوع «الصيرفة الخضراء والتنمية المستدامة» وحمل اسم المغفور له بإذن الله «الشيخ صالح عبدالله كامل» تقديراً لمسيرته الخيرة ولدوره المميز في رعاية ودعم العمل المصرفي الإسلامي، ورعاية فخرية من قبل الرئيس التنفيذي لمجموعة البركة المصرفية سعادة الأستاذ عدنان أحمد يوسف السفير الدولي للمسؤولية المجتمعية، وبمشاركة ضيف شرف المؤتمر سعادة الدكتور هاشم حسين رئيس مكتب ترويج الاستثمار والتكنولوجيا بمنظمة الأمم المتحدة للتنمية الصناعية «اليونيدو»، وبمشاركة خبراء ومتحدثين في مجالات الصيرفة الإسلامية والمسؤولية المجتمعية والتنمية المستدامة من العديد من الدول العربية والإسلامية

sector employees, domestic workers, and visitors to the Sultanate, aims to provide affordable health insurance to private sector employees and domestic workers, as well as visitors to Oman.

Dhamani mandatory health insurance will have an electronic platform that links the providers of health insurance, the health services, and customers as well as the government. Under the compulsory health insurance scheme, insurance companies are mandated to provide specific minimum health insurance cover.

Cover can only be written by insurance companies licensed in Oman so cannot be written on a non-admitted basis by foreign insurers. All health insurance claim management systems of insurer must be compatible with the electronic claims system applicable in Oman.

### Lebanese insurer to sell at least 67% stake

Lebanon-based Arabia Insurance Co. SAL's board of directors has approved the sale of at least 67% stake for \$7.9 per share, Middle East Insurance Review reported. Shareholders who do not wish to sell their shares will, on completion of the deal, be entitled to exchange their shares with the shares of the company that will undertake the purchase.

### Bupa Finance plc publishes prospectuses in relation to its offering of £300 million Fixed Rate Notes due 2027 and £350 million Fixed Rate Subordinated Notes due 2035

Bupa Finance lately announces that it has published prospectuses in relation to its £300 million 1.750 per cent. fixed rate notes due 2027 (the "Senior Notes") and its £350 million 4.125 per cent. fixed rate subordinated notes due 2035 (the "Tier 2 Notes") (together the "Prospectuses").

The Prospectuses have been approved by the Financial Conduct Authority and are now available for viewing. To view the full documents, please click here: [www.rns-pdf.londonstockexchange.com/rns/8370Q\\_1-2020-6-23.pdf](http://www.rns-pdf.londonstockexchange.com/rns/8370Q_1-2020-6-23.pdf) and [www.rns-pdf.londonstockexchange.com/rns/8370Q\\_2-2020-6-23.pdf](http://www.rns-pdf.londonstockexchange.com/rns/8370Q_2-2020-6-23.pdf). The Prospectuses have been submitted to the National Storage Mechanism and will shortly be available for inspection at: <https://data.fca.org.uk/#/nsm/nationalstoragemechanism>.

The Senior Notes and the Tier 2 Notes will be issued by Bupa Finance plc on 25 June 2020. The Senior Notes are guaranteed by The British United Provident Association Limited ("Bupa").

ومن خارجها. كما تم الإعلان الإعلان عن الفوز بجوائز التميز في مجال المسؤولية المجتمعية للمؤسسات المالية والمصارف الإسلامية لعام 2020 إلى جانب البنك الإسلامي الأردني كل من مجموعة البركة المصرفية في البحرين، والمعهد المالي والمصرفية الإسلامية بالجامعة الإسلامية العالمية في ماليزيا، وصندوق التضامن الإسلامي للتنمية /البنك الإسلامي للتنمية، وتم منح جائزة شخصية العام المتميزة في مجال العمل المصرفي الإسلامي لعام 2020 للشهيد الدكتور نظام بن محمد يعقوبي العباسي من مملكة البحرين. Arab News.

### CIBAFI Conducted its 3rd Strategic Session for Professional Development in the Islamic Finance Industry

The General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions (CIBAFI), the global umbrella of Islamic financial institutions has successfully conducted its 3rd Strategic Session for Professional Development in the Islamic Finance Industry.

The online strategic session started with opening remarks by Dr. Abdelilah Belatik, Secretary General, CIBAFI. It also witnessed the launch of CIBAFI translated training materials in English and French languages. The translation of CIBAFI training materials comes as a response to the increasing requests from non-Arabic speaking Islamic finance professional who are interested to take CIBAFI professional certifications in Islamic finance. CIBAFI was also pleased to announce that trainees can now take the required certification exams online through its web portal.



**Discussing recent rioting:** Prime Minister Hassan Diab meets Minister Mouhamad Fehmi with a delegation

## Lebanon PM says rioters should face tough response

Lebanon's prime minister lately said there should be a tough response to the riots that have erupted in different parts of the country in recent days, saying they were "organized acts of sabotage" and not linked to protests fueled by a worsening economic crisis.

Hassan Diab spoke at a meeting of the country's top political and security officials to discuss the rioting, which has caused damage to public and private property.

Lately, rallies spurred by a dramatic collapse of the local currency against the dollar degenerated into violence, mainly in the capital, Beirut, and the northern city of Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest. Some of the rioting has taken on a sectarian tone, raising fears in the tiny country that fought a devastating 1975-1990 civil war.

## Jumblatt: Sanctions weaken the state, not Hezbollah

Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) leader, Walid Jumblatt, confirmed lately that the sanctions imposed by the United States will not weaken Hezbollah, but the

Lebanese state.

"This is not the first time that Hezbollah and the United States have faced each other. But this time, the sanctions against Iran and Hezbollah will lead to economic collapse," Jumblatt said.

He considered that "Greater Lebanon" has not ended yet, but Sykes-Picot has ended, stressing that the Taif Agreement is still valid, but it has not been implemented.

He said: "There are sterile scenes and intellectual cycles, but there is no fear. Federalism is between whom and who?"

Commenting on the recent speech of Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah and the word "we will kill you," he said: "There is no direct impact of this word on me, but if he wants to kill the Americans, let him do so."

In response to a question about Nasrallah's invitation to the state to go to the eastern countries for help, he said: "If he [Nasrallah] wants to go to China, let us go to China if the Americans allow to build a power station, but the Iranian economic model is not useful."

Jumblatt concluded: "There is no restart button for the country. We talked

about ways to find solutions to avoid collapse, and there are solutions."

## UN Secretary-General appoints Najat Rochdi of Morocco as Deputy Special Coordinator for Lebanon

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced the appointment of Najat Rochdi of Morocco as his Deputy Special Coordinator for Lebanon, in the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL) and Resident Coordinator. Ms. Rochdi will also serve as Humanitarian Coordinator.

Rochdi succeeds Philippe Lazzarini of Switzerland, who completed his assignment on 31 March. The Secretary-General is grateful for his accomplishments and wishes him continued success in his new appointment as Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Rochdi brings over 20 years of experience in development and humanitarian assistance and international coordination in conflict and post-conflict areas, including through her latest assignment as Senior Adviser to the



Special Envoy for Syria and Director of Peer to Peer with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Geneva. Prior to this, Rochdi served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator with the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Earlier, she served as Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Cameroon and Deputy Director of the Representative Office of the United Nations Development Programme in Geneva.

Rochdi holds a doctorate in information systems from the National Institute of Statistics and of Applied Economics in Rabat and a Master's degree in Mathematics and Fundamental Applications from the University of Paris Sud 11. She is fluent in Arabic, English and French.— UNIC

### **BASSIL: FPM is being subjected to mass political assassination**

MP Gibran Bassil, expressed in a press conference, his dissatisfaction with the material and moral encroachment on his political team.

“We are being subjected to mass political assassination. No one can prevent our party from telling the truth, and we will no longer allow material and moral attacks against us,” Bassil said.

He said: “The government must remain ready to prevent change from falling through steadfastness and actions to preserve the confidence of the Lebanese, by ensuring security and monetary stability, and by implementing the required structural reforms.”

He also considered that a non-corrupt government is not enough to address country's problems.

“It is not enough for the government to be non-corrupt, but it is required to also fight the corrupt. Financial reforms in the next budget are essential to reducing the deficit, especially by controlling smuggling and customs, closing some institutions, and stopping waste,” he went on.

Bassil highlighted the importance of dialogue as the best mean to strengthen the internal unity to ward off sedition among the Lebanese.

“Strife between Christians and Muslims is forbidden, and the deep understandings that we witnessed in Mar Mikhael Church in 2006 prevent it from happening. No one will be able to bring it back and overthrow unity,” he stressed, pointing out the importance of President's invitation for Baabda meeting to ward off sedition. At the economic and monetary levels, Bassil explained that securing monetary stability must be done through measures to be borne by the Central Bank.

“Securing monetary stability must be done through measures that the central bank bears responsibility for, and not be limited to pumping the dollars into the market, but rather we must stop manipulating the exchange rate, gradually cancel the dollarization, depend on the national currency, and reduce the need for the dollar by reducing import and increasing production, export and attract investment,” Bassil underscored.

He stressed Lebanon's urgent need for assistance from the International Monetary Fund to address the country's problems.

Commenting on Caesar Act and its impact on the Lebanese scene, Bassil said: “Caesar Act is not an international law, but the US has the power to enforce it, and if it is implemented, this means cutting borders and increasing the burden of the displaced, and even bringing more of them due to the deteriorating economic conditions in Syria.”

### **The Reopening of Beirut Airport as of the 1st of July 2020**

Given Lebanon's success in addressing the Corona virus Pandemic so far, Rafik Hariri International Airport-Beirut, will resume its commercial flights as of July 1st, 2020 and its private flights as of 24th of June 2020.

The airport will receive only 10% of the air traffic compared to last year's air traffic. In order to encourage tourism in the country, visitors coming to Lebanon will not have to self-isolate for 14 days as self-isolation will be replaced by PCR Tests.

The passengers coming through the airport will be classified into two categories:

The First category being for those who comes from countries were PCR Tests are conducted. In this case passengers must conduct the PCR Test within 96 hours before coming to Lebanon, provided that the results are negative. Upon arrival passengers will also have to conduct another PCR test again at the airport.

All passengers who left Lebanon for a period not exceeding 1 week will be exempted from conducting the PCR Test upon arrival to Lebanon.

The Second category includes passengers who are coming from countries that do not conduct PCR Tests. In this case, those who arrive to Lebanon must conduct PCR Tests at Beirut airport, another test will also be conducted 72 hours after their arrival to Lebanon under the penalty of prosecution even if the result of their airport's tests came negative.

During these 72 hours they must abide by the self-isolation restrictions at their residences as the Ministry of Health will follow up on their cases.

Airlines operating at the airport, will pay for the tests conducted at the airport provided that the passengers would pay for the other tests. If the tests findings are negative passengers will continue their stay in Lebanon normally. If the tests are positive the passengers will have to abide by the self-isolation restrictions and follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Health according to the adopted Medical protocol.

All foreigners wishing to come to Lebanon, must have an insurance valid during their whole stay in Lebanon to cover the expenses of the coronavirus medical treatment if the tests findings are positive.

“The daily tragedy experienced by farmers is the best proof of their sufferings. Therefore, we call on the government and the High Relief Commission to compensate them for the losses that affected their agricultural produce, especially apples, as a result of snowballs...Agriculture is the backbone of the economy and we must preserve it,” tweeted MP Ziad Hawat Lately. Source: LBCINEWS

## Audi Sport Customer Racing Confirms GTD WeatherTech Sprint Cup Entry

Team Hardpoint to campaign Audi R8 LMS for IMSA Sprint Cup season



**Audi Sport customer racing confirms GTD WeatherTech Sprint Cup entry**

**T**eam Hardpoint to campaign Audi R8 LMS for IMSA Sprint Cup season.

Double duty for team owner/driver Rob Ferriol and driver Spencer Pumpelly in GT4 and now also in GT3

Audi looks to capture IMSA championships in Weather Tech Sprint Cup (WTSC) and Michelin Pilot Challenge (MPC)

HERNDON, Va., June 17, 2020 – Team Hardpoint expands their IMSA program to include an Audi R8 LMS GT3. Maintaining their current MPC Audi R8 LMS GT4 program, the team will also keep their existing driver line-up with Rob Ferriol and Spencer Pumpelly. Audi remains in the championship hunt as the revised IMSA GTD Sprint Cup racing schedule begins on July 4, at Daytona International Speedway.

Team Hardpoint made the decision to move into the top GT customer racing category in the WeatherTech Championship. A proven winner, the Audi R8 LMS 5.2l V10 powered machine has found much success in IMSA since entering the

category in 2012 winning several races and championships.

The Sprint season now begins on July 4 with the WeatherTech 240 at Daytona International Speedway and the second sprint race scheduled at Sebring International Raceway on July 18. The team has experience at both tracks and is planning to quickly acclimate to the GT3 race car.

Both Team Hardpoint drivers Ferriol and Pumpelly have had extensive experience in the Audi R8 LMS GT4 and are confident this will carry over to the new GT3 program. Ferriol started Team Hardpoint mid-season 2019 and partnered with driver coach Pumpelly in the Audi R8 LMS GT4. Pumpelly, a familiar name in the paddock, has competed in an Audi R8 LMS with Magnus Racing and Flying Lizard Motorsports. In addition to the experienced driver line-up, race engineer, John Horton, has experience with the Audi R8 LMS GT3 and GT4 race cars, which will add substantial knowledge going into the race season.

“The WeatherTech Championship has been a stretch goal of ours since we started Team Hardpoint late last year. We initially eyed 2021 to make the jump into GTD, but as with most things in racing, timing is everything,” said Team Principal Rob Ferriol. “The temporary pause in the 2020 season, while difficult, has allowed us to continue refining our team, but also put us in a position to react when the door opened to expanding our partnership with Audi. We have a lot to learn, but I’m excited to be able to move into yet another car with Spencer as co-driver, continue growing our relationship with Audi, and see our team rise to the challenge.”

The Audi Sport customer racing U.S. program was established in 2012 to provide engineering, parts and marketing support to all customers. The program continues to grow and includes championship opportunities in three categories – GTD, GS, and TCR classes. By design, the Audi racing program offers a unique ladder system that offers a portfolio of race cars from professional sportscar classes to club level competition.

“We couldn’t be happier to support Team Hardpoint as they extend their Audi Sport customer racing portfolio from GT4 to the GTD category,” said Tristan Herbert, Audi Sport customer racing manager. “This is exactly the kind of multi-platform partnership we strive to obtain in motorsports.”

Audi of America, Inc. and its U.S. dealers offer a full line of German-engineered luxury vehicles. AUDI AG is among the most successful luxury automotive brands, delivering about 1.845 million vehicles globally in 2019. In the U.S., Audi of America sold just over 224,000 vehicles in 2019 and launched the brand’s first fully electric vehicle, the Audi e-tron – one of four fully electric models coming to the U.S. market in the next two years. Globally, the brand aims to be CO2 neutral by 2050. Visit [audiusa.com](http://audiusa.com) or [media.audiusa.com](http://media.audiusa.com) for more information regarding Audi vehicles and business topics.



Lara, 30 years

**Never knew peace ... never gave up!**

**Lebanon, life's ahead**

<b>Exhibition</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>STEP 2020</b>	11 – 12, February 2020	Dubai, UAE	Step Group	media@stepgroup.co
<b>The 4th annual Dubai World Insurance Congress (DWIC)</b>	26 – 27, February 2020	Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Dubai	lobal Reinsurance, in partnership with Dubai Int'l Financial Center	adam.jordan@nqsm.com
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>Middle East Healthcare Financing Summit</b>	9-10 March, 2020	Rosewood Hotel, Abu Dhabi	Maarefah	info@mehcfs.com
<b>9th Middle East Business &amp; IT Resilience Summit</b>	12th March 2020	Dubai, UAE	N/A	summit@bcm-me.ae
<b>Rendez-vous des Carthage</b>	22-24 March, 2020	Laico Tunis Hotel	Tunis Re & FTUSA	<a href="https://www.rdv-carthage.com/">https://www.rdv-carthage.com/</a>
<b>Rendez-vous de Casablanca de l'Assurance</b>	01-02 April, 2020	Hayatt Regency Hotel	Federation Marocaine Des Societes D'Assurances et Reassurance	info@mehcfs.com information@rdvdelassurance.ma
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>STEP 2020</b>	11 – 12, February 2020	Dubai, UAE	Step Group	media@stepgroup.co
<b>The 4th annual Dubai World Insurance Congress (DWIC)</b>	26 – 27, February 2020	Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Dubai	Global Reinsurance, in partnership with Dubai Int'l Financial Center	adam.jordan@nqsm.com
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>Middle East Healthcare Financing Summit</b>	9-10 March, 2020	Rosewood Hotel, Abu Dhabi	Maarefah	info@mehcfs.com
<b>9th Middle East Business &amp; IT Resilience Summit</b>	12th March 2020	Dubai, UAE	N/A	summit@bcm-me.ae
<b>Rendez-vous des Carthage</b>	22-24 March, 2020	Laico Tunis Hotel	Tunis Re & FTUSA	<a href="https://www.rdv-carthage.com/">https://www.rdv-carthage.com/</a>
<b>Rendez-vous de Casablanca de l'Assurance</b>	01-02 April, 2020	Hayatt Regency Hotel	Federation Marocaine Des Societes D'Assurances et Reassurance	info@mehcfs.com information@rdvdelassurance.ma

<b>Conference</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>STEP 2020</b>	11 - 12, February 2020	Dubai, UAE	Step Group	media@stepgroup.co
<b>The 4th annual Dubai World Insurance Congress (DWIC)</b>	26 - 27, February 2020	Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Dubai	Global Reinsurance, in partnership with Dubai Int'l Financial Center	adam.jordan@nqsm.com
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>Middle East Healthcare Financing Summit</b>	9-10 March, 2020	Rosewood Hotel, Abu Dhabi	Maarefah	info@mehcfs.com
<b>9th Middle East Business &amp; IT Resilience Summit</b>	12th March 2020	Dubai, UAE	N/A	summit@bcm-me.ae
<b>Rendez-vous des Carthage</b>	22-24 March, 2020	Laico Tunis Hotel	Tunis Re & FTUSA	<a href="https://www.rdv-carthage.com/">https://www.rdv-carthage.com/</a>
<b>Rendez-vous de Casablanca de l'Assurance</b>	01-02 April, 2020	Hayatt Regency Hotel	Federation Marocaine Des Societes D'Assurances	info@mehcfs.com information@rdvdelassurance.ma
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>STEP 2020</b>	11 - 12, February 2020	Dubai, UAE	Step Group	media@stepgroup.co
<b>The 4th annual Dubai World Insurance Congress (DWIC)</b>	26 - 27, February 2020	Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Dubai	Global Reinsurance, in partnership with Dubai Int'l Financial Center	adam.jordan@nqsm.com
<b>Iraq Oil and Gas Show</b>	2-3 March 2020	Babylon Hotel, Baghdad	Ministry of Oil Announces	events@frontier-exchange.com
<b>Middle East Healthcare Financing Summit</b>	9-10 March, 2020	Rosewood Hotel, Abu Dhabi	Maarefah	info@mehcfs.com
<b>9th Middle East Business &amp; IT Resilience Summit</b>	12th March 2020	Dubai, UAE	N/A	summit@bcm-me.ae
<b>Rendez-vous des Carthage</b>	22-24 March, 2020	Laico Tunis Hotel	Tunis Re & FTUSA	<a href="https://www.rdv-carthage.com/">https://www.rdv-carthage.com/</a>
<b>Rendez-vous de Casablanca de l'Assurance</b>	01-02 April, 2020	Hayatt Regency Hotel	Federation Marocaine Des Societes D'Assurances	info@mehcfs.com information@rdvdelassurance.ma



**ROLLS-ROYCE ONCE AGAIN WELCOMING CLIENTS TO THE HOME OF ROLLS-ROYCE TO COLLECT THEIR MOTOR CARS**  
*NEW ROLLS-ROYCE WRAITH, FINISHED IN RED VELVET SPARKLE WITH A SADDLERY TAN AND CONTRASTING ANTHRACITE INTERIOR*

## CLIENT HANDOVER CEREMONIES RESUME AT REOPENED HOME OF ROLLS-ROYCE

THE HOME OF ROLLS-ROYCE IS ONCE again welcoming clients to collect their new motor car in person, following the reopening of the Goodwood-based Global Centre of Luxury Manufacturing Excellence.

Rolls-Royce once again welcoming clients to the Home of Rolls-Royce to collect their motor car in person, following reopening of manufacturing plant in May 2020

Handover formalities sympathetically finessed to reflect 'new normality' at

Goodwood-based Global Centre of Luxury Manufacturing Excellence

Rigorous health, hygiene, security and social distancing measures remain in place to safeguard clients and colleagues

The resumption of customer handovers restores a much-needed element of normality for the marque, which is currently operating a single manufacturing shift under rigorous health and hygiene regimes. Measures have been put in place across the Goodwood site, including additional security and hand-washing facilities, one-way systems for foot traffic and modified seating arrangements in cafés and other public areas. All staff are issued with facemasks, which must be worn at all times in production areas.

In tandem with building 'the best car in the world', Rolls-Royce is also pleased to continue producing face visor and protective gown kits for frontline healthcare workers, as it has done since the earliest days of the pandemic response.

Having shut down operations voluntarily on 23 March 2020 to protect the

workforce, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars became the first UK automotive manufacturer to restart production when it reopened on 4 May 2020. Client collections have resumed as lockdown restrictions are eased in the UK and elsewhere, and the number of patrons choosing to receive the keys to their new motor car in person at Goodwood is steadily returning.

Recently, a client took delivery of a magnificent new Rolls-Royce Wraith, finished in Red Velvet Sparkle with a Saddlery Tan and contrasting Anthracite interior – the first time this combination has been commissioned in a Wraith – together with matching steering-wheel and door umbrellas. The car also boasts carefully curated Bespoke Black Badge elements including 21" Carbon Alloy Composite Wheels, Black Badge Treadplates and Dark Chrome Spirit of Ecstasy and Grille.

The handover ceremony was conducted with the customary courtesies, sympathetically finessed where required, to comply with the marque's strict hygiene and social





**TOR CAR IN PERSON: A MAGNIFICENT INTERIOR**

Rolls-Royce will be our ‘new normal’ for some time to come. Handover ceremonies are a much-enjoyed moment of familiarity; they are both celebratory and uplifting, and remind us of our true purpose as a company. We look forward to many more such occasions in the weeks and months ahead.”

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the BMW Group. The company is the world’s leading luxury manufacturer based at The Home of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood, near Chichester, West Sussex, which comprises its global headquarters and Global Centre of Luxury Manufacturing Excellence – the only place in the world where Rolls-Royce motor cars are hand-crafted.

Production began on 1 January 2003 with the world’s pinnacle luxury product, Phantom. The range has since expanded to include Ghost, Wraith, Dawn, Cullinan and their Black Badge counterparts. An all-new Ghost is due to be launched later this year. The company has customers in more than 50 countries worldwide attended by a network of Rolls-Royce dealerships. Total sales in 2019 exceeded 5,000 cars. Over 2,000 people are employed at The Home of Rolls-Royce.

#### ROLLS-ROYCE PLC

Rolls-Royce plc is a leading industrial technology company with manufacturing facilities around the world employing some 52,000 people. Its head office is in London with main operations in Derby, UK; Bristol, UK; Indianapolis, US; Dahlewitz, Germany; Friedrichshafen, Germany; and Singapore.

Originally founded in 1906, Rolls-Royce Ltd was nationalised in 1971, becoming Rolls-Royce 1971 Ltd., initially including the Motor Car Division. The Motor Car Division was floated as a separate company in 1973, and became Rolls-Royce Motors Holdings Ltd, which traded as Rolls-Royce Motors. Rolls-Royce 1971 Ltd. was privatised in 1987, becoming Rolls-Royce plc.

Rolls-Royce plc designs and manufactures engines for civil aerospace and military aircraft and ships. Its Power Systems business unit, based in Friedrichshafen, Germany, designs and manufactures engines for a range of land and marine applications including power generation. Rolls-Royce plc has customers in more than 150 countries, comprising more than 400 airlines and leasing customers, 160 armed forces, 70 navies, and more than 5,000 power and nuclear customers. For the last 60 years it has also designed, supplied and supported the nuclear propulsion plant that provides power for all of the UK Royal Navy’s nuclear submarines.

In January 2017, Rolls-Royce plc reached agreement with investigating authorities in the UK, US and Brazil relating to its activities in a number of overseas markets. On 20 May 2020, Rolls-Royce plc announced 9,000 job losses worldwide, predominantly in its Civil Aerospace business, in response to the medium-term reduction in demand for civil aerospace engines and services resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

distancing policies. During the visit, the client took the opportunity to meet associates from the production line and specialist departments responsible for hand-building his car – just some of the 90 pairs of hands typically involved in creating a Rolls-Royce.

Torsten Müller-Ötvös, Chief Executive Officer, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, said, “It is a tremendous pleasure to welcome our discerning patrons to the Home of Rolls-Royce once again. That this has been possible so soon after reopening, while maintaining both our tradition of hospitality and our critical new operational measures, is a tribute to the conscientiousness and commitment of the entire Rolls-Royce family. We have worked incredibly hard to remain in touch with our customers during this crisis. The fact that so many are choosing to collect their new car in person, even in these circumstances, underlines how close and valuable these relationships have become.”

He added, “We have to accept that the comprehensive safety and hygiene measures we have put in place at the Home of

#### At-a-glance summary:

	Rolls-Royce Motor Cars	Rolls-Royce plc
<b>Established</b>	2003	1987
<b>Ownership</b>	Wholly owned subsidiary of BMW Group (Munich)	Rolls-Royce Holdings plc
<b>Products</b>	The world’s pinnacle super-luxury motor cars	Engines and power systems and military aircraft engines and power-plant technology
<b>Head office</b>	Goodwood, West Sussex	Leigh, Greater Manchester
<b>Manufacturing sites</b>	Global Centre of Luxury Manufacturing Excellence, Goodwood, West Sussex	Operational sites include 52 manufacturing sites in 12 countries across 10 continents, plus 100+ service and distribution sites in 100+ countries
<b>Employees</b>	c. 2,000	c. 52,000
<b>CEO</b>	Torsten Müller-Ötvös	Warren East

# LIBYA INSURANCE CO.

The First National Insurance Company  
Leader in Insurance Industry



Marine Insurance

Fire & Burglary Insurance

Aviation Insurance

Health Insurance

Motor Insurance

Individuals & Family Insurance

Property Protection Insurance

Medicaments Insurance

Head office : Schar Street, Branching From 24 December Street - Amman Building - Tripoli - Libya

☎ +218 21 444 41 75 📠 +218 21 444 4424

[www.libtamin.ly](http://www.libtamin.ly) | [Info@libtamin.ly](mailto:Info@libtamin.ly)



## Strong Local Idiom Large Global Network

**3**

Continents

**17**

Countries

**700+**

Branches

**3 Million+**

Customers

*Your Partner Bank*

alBaraka 



# EMBRACE BROKER CHALLENGE

WHEN YOUR BUSINESS IS WELL COVERED,  
NOTHING CAN STAND IN YOUR WAY.