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September 22, 2021

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The region's most established trade and export finance conference returns

Following on from the virtual event held in February and as part of its combined hybrid offering for 2021, Global Trade Review is delighted to be returning to Dubai for GTR MENA 2021 on September 22 for a special in-person gathering, taking place at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers.

Reflecting on the seismic previous 18 months for trade and exports in the region, proceedings will address a range of topics and issues, from trade resilience and the road to post-Covid recovery to the many exciting developments in the fintech and tradetech space, issues around supply chain management and SCF, emerging trade corridors, asset distribution and the increasing significance of ESG.

As the first opportunity to bring the GTR MENA community together in-person since February 2020, this event represents an exclusive opportunity for participants to network and connect with experts, industry peers and potential clients, all within a Covid-safe environment in line with the latest government regulations. Tickets are capped at 300 attendees.

Key themes: 6 of the best



Read the event agenda on following pages

Agenda		GTR MENA 2021 Dubai	Wednesday 22 September, 2021
Wednesday 22 September: Morning			
09.00-09.10	Chairman's opening remarks Vincent O'Brien, Director, SCF, UAE, Member of the Executive Committee, IFC Banking Committee	09.15-09.30 The road to recovery – what does the current economic landscape tell us? This opening panel discussion will consider a wide range of issues from the outlook for oil prices to current supply chain, shipping and portability of trade for SMEs, along with the wider prospects for private growth in regions and government bodies and how our partners' history and their experience for these businesses and sectors may be impacted by the pandemic. Executive attention will focus on the role of trade and trade finance and recent recovery. The role of research, as well as considering the importance of the research, is key to the future of the region and the way the MENA region has to play in providing the fuel for wider international economic recovery. Themes for consideration will include: a) role of business and the importance of creating an investment-friendly environment, the impact of government stimulus, anticipation for 2020 and the need to encourage greater participation, demand for logistical services, infrastructure and business support, as well as highlighting various funding and partnership opportunities.	10.00-10.15 Everything fintech – what is the next chapter in trade digitisation? As the global fintech and trade finance communities align for trade finance, platforms offering trade finance solutions are looking for digital solutions. This panel will consider the next steps for digital trade finance. Panelists will include: financial experts such as Abu Dhabi Global Market, leading digital trade finance solutions, and the unique benefits of the region in containing global finance and expertise with local conditions and policy making.
09.30-09.40	Keynote: Looking forward – celebrating the resilience of international trade Following the other exciting challenges of 2020 and 2021, the forward looking address will offer a positive spin on the future of the region and the way the MENA region has to play in providing the fuel for wider international economic recovery. Themes for consideration will include: a) role of business and the importance of creating an investment-friendly environment, the impact of government stimulus, anticipation for 2020 and the need to encourage greater participation, demand for logistical services, infrastructure and business support, as well as highlighting various funding and partnership opportunities.	10.15-10.30 To what extent is the current supply chain and SCF system in need of change? The issue of supply chain globally has been a regular topic of discussion over the last 18 months. From the March 2020 disruption in the Asia Pacific region to the Ever Given incident in the Red Sea, the challenges of 2020, to the recent incident in the Gulf of Mexico, the supply chain has been under significant pressure. This session will consider how such disruptions potentially impact on trade at a time of heightened financial pressure, assessing to what extent the fragility of the global trade system has been exposed. With significant questions also raised around supply chain financing practices, the conversation will debate to what extent the sustainability of the current supply chain system is being called into question.	10.30-10.45 Case study: Is Dubai now the global hub for blockchain, cryptocurrency and e-commerce? A key aspect of the success of digital transformation has been the embracing of blockchain and cryptocurrencies, which have the ability to streamline and optimise many of the trade and supply chain processes. With the introduction of blockchain and the growing acceptance of the use of crypto and digital currencies in what is now the
10.45-10.55	Networking break	10.55-11.05	Networking break

GTR MENA 2021 Virtual attendees by sector



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Wednesday 22 September: Morning

09.00-09.10

Chairman's opening remarks

Vincent O'Brien, Director, ICC UAE; Member of the Executive Committee, ICC Banking Commission

09.10-09.30

Keynote: Looking forward – celebrating the resilience of international trade

Following the often exhausting challenges of 2020 and 2021, this forward looking address will offer a positive vision of the future when it comes to global trade and the key role that the MENA region has to play in providing the fuel for wider international economic recovery. Themes for consideration will include ease of business and the importance of creating an investment-friendly environment, the important role of government stimulus, anticipation for Expo 2020 and the need to encourage greater participation, demand for logistical services, bottlenecks and lessons learned, as well as highlighting various exciting new partnerships and collaborations.

Ahmad Sultan Al Haddad, Chief Operating Officer, Parks & Zones, DP World, UAE Region

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

L Almeida, Markel International (Dubai) Limited

09.30-10.20

The road to recovery – what does the current economic landscape tell us?

This opening panel discussion will consider a wide range of themes, from the outlook for oil prices to current liquidity levels, working capital and availability of credit for SMEs, along with the wider prospects for trade growth as regulators and government bodies roll back on payment holidays and loan extensions for those businesses and sectors most impacted by the pandemic. Elsewhere, discussion will focus on the role of funds and non-bank providers amid recent scandals, the role of insurers, as well as considering the importance of the rescheduled Expo 2020 in boosting the economy and reviving trade confidence.

Moderator: Dr Ashraf Mahate, Chief Economist, Trade & Export Development, Dubai Exports

Khatija Haque, Chief Economist & Head of Research, Emirates NBD

Massimo Falcioni, Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Credit Insurance (ECI)

Simon Penney, UK Trade Commissioner for the Middle East; Consul General (HMCg) to Dubai

10.20-11.00 Networking break

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

R Harding, Coriolis Technologies

11.00-11.45

'Everything fintech' – what is the next chapter in trade digitisation?

As the quest continues amid banks and corporates alike for trade finance platforms offering holistic solutions and greater digital efficiency, this group will consider the next steps for digital banking. Reflecting on recent efforts by financial centres such as Abu Dhabi Global Market in forming strategic partnerships to develop financial infrastructure, focus will centre on adapting and integrating regulations in line with continued commitment to sustainable digital transformation. Topics for discussion will include increasing levels of SME and MSME funding ('trade democratisation'), the role of blockchain technology in executing trade finance distribution transactions, and the unique benefits of the region in combining global influence and expertise with local ambition and policy making.

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

Halina Bernard, Head of Treasury, Africa & Middle East, General Motors

Carl Wegner, Chief Executive Officer, Contour

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

Raja Al Mazrouei, Executive Vice-President, FinTech Hive, Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC)

Dr. Bhaskar Dasgupta, Head of Market Infrastructure, Digital & VC/FinTech, Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM)

“Great session and excellent moderation and content.”

Yusuf Khan, Citi

11.45-12.10

Case study: The rapid rise of e-commerce

Previously slow to embrace the potential of e-commerce, the GCC is now the world's fastest-growing market. This session will provide insights into this exciting sector, examining a range of issues from 'average basket size' and what differentiates GCC customers, challenges that international brands face in penetrating the market, the unique role of 'social commerce' and the advantages provided by choosing regional experts with digital capabilities rather than global parcel shippers. The conversation will also look at how duty calculation, customs clearance and cross-border GCC trucking can make or break a brand in the Middle East, as well as Dubai's key role in the future of the lucrative African e-commerce market.

Hassan Mikail, CEO, Middle East, Shipa E-Commerce to be interviewed by Dr Karen Remo, CEO & Co-Founder, New Perspective Media Group

12.10-12.55

To what extent is the current supply chain and SCF system in need of change?

The issue of supply chain durability has been a regular source of headlines over the last 18 months, from the March 2021 disruption in the Suez Canal caused by the Ever Given tanker, to the PPE challenges of 2020, to the recent issues faced in China. This session will consider how such disruptions potentially impact on costs at a time of heightened financial pressure, assessing to what extent the fragility of the 'just in time' model has been exposed. With additional questions also posed around supply chain financing practices, the conversation will debate to what extent the sustainability of the current supply chain model is being called into question.

Moderator: Michael Rolfe, Head of Trade Finance, BACB

Bruno Massera, Chief Financial Officer, Middle East, BRF

Sereen Ahmed, Director, Head of Trade & Working Capital Middle East, Barclays

Anand Nagaraj, Executive Vice-President, Business Development, Triterras

Claudia Perri, Regional Commercial Director Southern Europe & MENA, HPD Landscape

12.55-14.00 Lunch

Wednesday 22 September: Afternoon

14.00-14.45

A shifting landscape – emerging corridor opportunities, changing dynamics and new risks

This session will provide a comprehensive analysis of the GCC's role at the centre of global trade activities, current and future trade corridor opportunities, changing dynamics and the regional risk climate, from the progress of ambitious regional transformation programmes and what they mean for trade flows to the impact of the Biden administration on the sanctions landscape and the prospects of a new Iran deal. Conversation will also focus on the latest geopolitical tensions and their potential trade impact, as well as the importance of covering cross-border risks when conducting business in key strategic markets such as China, Russia and Turkey.

Moderator: Maninder Bhandari, Director, Derby Group
 Sorana Parvulescu, Partner, Control Risks
 Mritunjay Singh, Lead, Trade Product Management, Trade Finance, Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank
 Chris McLeese, Commercial Director, GCC, Windward
 Orhan Gunes, Managing Director, Head of Commodity Trade Finance, Sberbank (Switzerland)
 Daniel Hewitt, Regional Manager, MENA, Accuity

14.45-15.30

MENA-Africa trade and infrastructure – fuelling 'disruptive' growth

Africa continues to present huge opportunities despite clear and well-documented challenges. This session will shine a light on efforts to unlock market access for companies looking to enter African markets, along with the crucial role of DFIs and multilaterals in providing both financing support and guarantees to protect strategic value chains and keep suppliers afloat. Discussion will also focus on how African governments are looking to outsource infrastructural development plans and the opportunities for exporting companies in filling requirement gaps, the need to look beyond 'the usual suspects' to more untapped markets as well as "the two-speed recovery", the extent to which the pandemic has exposed global inequalities across crucial industries such as energy and power.

Moderator: Farrukh Siddiqui, Founding Partner, Emerging Capital Management Partners
 Rahul Sikka, Vice-President, Head of Africa PT&D, L&T Construction
 Nicole Rogers, Chief Executive Officer, Agriprocity
 Tobias Maier, CFO, Middle East & Africa, DHL; CEO, Middle East & Africa, Saloodo!
 Simon Cook, Partner, Sullivan & Worcester UK

15.30-15.50 Networking break

15.50-16.35

Broadening the ecosystem – can asset distribution close the trade finance gap?

With the global trade finance gap showing no sign of decreasing – if anything it continues to grow – the need to broaden the appeal of trade finance as an investible and liquid asset class for funds, family offices and institutional investors continues to be a pressing concern, as does the need to ensure a strong secondary market, whether it's banks selling their books to other parties or seeking to acquire assets due to changing circumstances. This session will look at how the ecosystem has changed to accommodate greater interest in these assets, from the increasing role for non-bank providers alongside smaller FIs, to issues around transparency and due diligence amid high-profile recent examples of malpractice, to the role of technology in providing a more efficient marketplace.

Moderator: Naura Hussain, Relationship Manager, Financial Institutions International, United Bank UAE; Chairperson, ITFA Middle East Regional Committee (MERC)
 Lakshmanan Sankaran, Founder Chairman & CEO, TradeAssets
 Syed Hassan Javed, Head of Trade Finance, Gulf International Bank (GIB)
 Mansour Davarian, Managing Director, Head of Platform Sales, Demica
 Viacheslav Oganezov, Co-Founder & CEO, Finverity

16.35-17.20

"From every crisis comes opportunity" – can ESG build a more sustainable future?

As the world emerges from the pandemic determined to tackle long-standing problems head on, this session will consider the role of sustainability (environmental, social, governance) in the wider recovery, from greater focus on ESG criteria when allocating capital and the establishment of ESG-specific funds, the importance of targets and difference between incentives and penalties, new priorities and activities across the regional renewables space and the work undertaken in developing 'the circular economy'. Other points for consideration will include the need for leadership programmes in driving change across business functions – ensuring ESG-compliant investment and vendor selection – and the need for companies to push banks to play their part.

Moderator: Semih Ozkan, Director, Structured & Trade Finance Sales Head, Middle East, SMBC; Advisor, ITFA Middle East Regional Committee (MERC)

Rushdi Ali, Executive Finance Director, Europe, Middle East & Africa, GE Power

James Adams, Group Treasurer, Chalhoub Group

Silvina Bruggia, Proposition Director, I&A, Emerging & Frontier Markets, Refinitiv

Michelle Leong, International Export Finance Manager, Middle East, Afghanistan & Pakistan, UK Export Finance

Mohamed El Ghamry, Head of Global Trade & Receivables Finance, UAE, HSBC Bank

17.20-17.25

Chairman's closing remarks

Vincent O'Brien, Director, ICC UAE; Member of the Executive Committee, ICC Banking Commission

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

L McAuley, Global Trade Professionals Alliance (GTPA)

"It is vital therefore for all professionals involved in trade to be up to date with innovation, disruption and the advance of technology. That is precisely the value offered by GTR MENA. This is where the rubber hits the road!"

Peter Matza, ACT

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Simon Ring, Pole Star

"Part of the issue with SMEs is the size of their requirements – quite often financial institutions don't want the sort of small deals that these businesses need."

Jan Ward, Corrotherm

"Sustainability isn't just a buzzword in the UAE – it's a way of living."

Nick Cochrane-Dyet,
British Business Group Abu Dhabi

"Technology is going to drive how we look at trade finance in the future."

Lisa McAuley,
Global Trade Professionals Alliance (GTPA)

"The key impediment to digitalisation is not money. It is not even technology. It is people and priorities."

Sumit Roy, TradeAssets

"Traditionally this industry has been dominated by large banks... however what we're seeing on the other side is a massive flow of alternative capital trying to get into the industry."

Viacheslav Oganezov, Finverity

"It's good to have a formalisation of relations... Israel is important in terms of not just trade, but innovation."

Sanjeev Dutta, DMCC

"There is a huge demand in manufacturing; with vaccines, structures need to be put in place to be able to administer them safely."

Moji Hunponu-Wusu, Woodhall Capital

"Blockchain is an inherent technology that is vital for global collaboration."

Carl Wegner, Contour

"Good business behaviours need to be rewarded and incentivised."

Rebecca Harding, Coriolis Technologies

"Collaboration is key in closing the trade finance gap."

Sudhir Dole, Trade Information Network

"Covid-19 gave people the opportunity to identify what they want to do rather than what they have to do."

Adam Boukadida, Etihad Airways

GTR MENA 2021 DUBAI

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