THE AUSTRALIAN LEBANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber NEWS

NOVEMBER 2017 AUSTRALIAN LEBANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE www.alcc.com.au

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The ALCC played a major role in hosting the MENA Delegations

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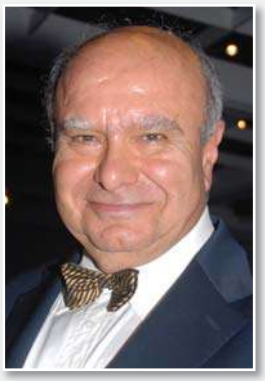
A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Members,
Supporters and Friends.

As we approach the end of 2017, I wish to convey the ALCC board's deep appreciation for the great interest, participation and support you have maintained over the years towards the Chamber and do take this opportunity to pass on the board's best wishes for the coming year. We certainly look forward to many more good years of close and solid relationship with all and remain ready to offer the chamber's assistance in any business related matter that would be of benefit to you.

In our chamber newsletter which is now available for you, you'll be able to see and read about the chamber's various business activities throughout 2017 , ending with the 10th World Chambers Congress in Sydney, organized by the International Chamber in Paris and the NSW Business Chamber. This was a major event for New South Wales which attracted a large presence of world chambers and business leaders. The ALCC hosted the Middle East and North Africa delegations and offered all the assistance possible to the various delegates who showed keen interest in what Australia had to offer in products and services.

On behalf of the Chamber's board of Directors, I wish you good health and prosperous years ahead.

Joe Khattar, AM
ALCC President

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EXPO 2020 DUBAI: BRINGING OPPORTUNITIES TO BUSINESSES AROUND THE WORLD

Expo 2020 Dubai will be the first World Expo hosted by an Arab nation, and the first to be held in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) region. It will run from 20 October 2020 to 10 April 2021.

Through its theme, 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future', Expo 2020 Dubai will provide a platform to encourage creativity, innovation and collaboration in the areas of Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability.

More than 200 participants including nations, multilateral organisations, corporations and educational institutions from around the world will come together to showcase and celebrate their best achievements, innovations and culture. Expo 2020 Dubai will inform and inspire many millions of visitors from around the world, 70 percent of which are expected to come from overseas, allowing them to experience new innovations, forums for sharing ideas and cultural exchange, performances, concerts, dance, food, and music.

Expo 2020 Dubai will be a gateway to new markets for all businesses, offering them the chance to connect and work with other companies in the Expo supply chain, as well millions of visitors – echoing the theme of 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future'. Expo will offer businesses of all sizes, including small and medium sized companies (SMEs), a unique global platform to showcase their products, win investment, forge agreements and take advantage of potential long-term growth opportunities.

Expo 2020 Dubai is committed to integrating SMEs and tapping into their innovation and agility, with 20 percent of Expo's budget to be spent with them, reinforcing the UAE's plans to support long-term economic growth and stimulate economic diversification. Australia already understands the importance of SMEs and the vital contribution they make to the Australian economy, contributing about one-third of total GDP, employing approximately 4.7 million people, and representing around 90 percent of all goods exporters and more than 60 percent of service exporters.

Expo 2020 Dubai is actively encouraging SMEs to bid for contracts, thereby tapping into their innovation and flexibility. To date, more than half of all contracts awarded by Expo 2020 have gone to SMEs, a commitment which reflects the wide range of opportunities available to them.

Many contracts with Expo will be focused on goods and services of particular relevance to SMEs, such as F&B opportunities and the 5,000 unique products that will be sold as part of the Expo 2020 Dubai licencing programme.

In 2017, the Expo 2020 Dubai procurement process has focused on capital expenditure and construction opportunities, with a total of AUD 3.8 billion (AED 11 billion) of construction contracts and AUD 125.6 million (AED 360 million) of non-construction contracts to be awarded. In 2018, the procurement process will be more focused on services and event operations, reflecting the wide range of opportunities available to businesses of all sizes in Australia, and around the world.

Last month (September), a team from Expo 2020 Dubai, in collaboration with the Dubai Chamber of

Commerce and Industry, travelled to the World Chambers Congress in Sydney – attended by more than 1,000 delegates from 110 countries – to highlight the lasting business benefits of working with Expo.
As part of its commitment to connect with business of all sizes from around the world and spread the opportunities as far as possible, the Expo 2020 Dubai team outlined the wide range of opportunities available to businesses within the Expo supply chain.

The Expo team held an informative session for delegates, organised side meetings with the international business community and hosted an exhibition stand to engage attendees and promote awareness, as well as giving an overview of the Expo Live Programme and presenting Expo's exciting District 2020 legacy plans.

Expo Live has an allocation of USD 100 million (AUD 128.2 million) to support projects that offer creative solutions to pressing challenges that impact people's lives or help preserve our world – or both. Winning projects receive a support grant, business guidance, promotion and acceleration of their creative solutions, and will have the opportunity to showcase their work at Expo 2020 Dubai.

Through its flagship Innovation Impact Grant Programme, Expo Live has attracted more than 1,100 applicants from 107 countries and awarded dozens of grants to projects that would not reach their full potential without this support.

The Expo 2020 Dubai team at the World Chambers Congress was led by Manal AlBayat, Senior Vice President, Business Development and Integration, Expo 2020 Dubai, who said: "We want companies of all sizes from Australia and around the world to recognise not only the opportunities available to them at Expo 2020 Dubai, but also to be aware of the important role they can play in supporting Expo to deliver a celebration of ingenuity that leaves a lasting legacy for years to come.

"Events like the World Chambers Congress are an important step in engaging key figures in the international business community and highlighting the opportunities available to them, as well as the long-term benefits they will offer."

To start taking advantage of these opportunities, all companies and individuals in Australia, and around the world, are encouraged register on the Expo 2020 Dubai eSourcing Portal at: https://esource.expo2020dubai.ae

To find out more about Expo 2020 Dubai, visit www.expo2020dubai.ae and follow @Expo2020Dubai on social media.

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THE PORT OF TRIPOLI LEBANON ALREADY IN ACTION HANDLING IN TRANSIT GOODS TO SYRIA

As mentioned and as predicted in earlier articles, the Port of Tripoli is now operating as an important transit zone for a variety of products, primarily building material heading for some of the devastated areas in Syria and which are now relatively peaceful and already in full preparation for the enormous reconstruction exercise.

The ports of Beirut and Tripoli are ideally positioned due close proximity with Syria, to handle the large quantities of badly needed construction material. Both ports are well equipped and well prepared to play a very effective role in the handling of all sorts of products in transit for the Syrian emerging market and in particular , construction material.

The Australian Lebanese chamber through its long experience and physical presence in Lebanon and the Middle East region and as witness to the aforesaid, would be happy to provide any further information or assistance to those that may be interested to explore further.

Michael Rizk
Head of Trade Relations
ALCC

ALCC ANNUAL LUNCHEON - MONDAY 21 AUGUST 2017 - DOLTONE HOUSE, JONES BAY WHARF

The ALCC held its signature annual luncheon on Monday 21 August at Doltone House, Jones Bay Wharf, with special guest speaker, the Honourable Scott Morrison MP, Federal Treasurer, and Tim Gilbert as Master of Ceremonies. The luncheon was well attended, with over 800 members and guests from all industry sectors, as well as government bodies and authorities.

The Treasurer provided the audience with many important insights into how the Federal Government is stimulating growth and prosperity through a number of key initiatives, and what this means in practical terms regarding jobs, urban and regional development. This was followed by an insightful and lively Q&A session.

The luncheon was proudly supported by the Chamber's principal partners, Arab Bank Australia and Etihad Airways.

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THE GULF STATES - AN UPDATE

It is clear that, in many respects for the Gulf States, the reality in terms of economic position and outlook is quite positive, contrary to what has been portrayed in a number of media reports. It is undeniable that the region faces a number of challenges, but it is clear that the leadership of these dynamic and entrepreneurial nations are dealing with these challenges in a methodical and structural manner, with long-term stability in mind.

Below are a number of trends and observations which are pertinent in terms of assessing the economic and business environment in the region:

1. Mergers/consolidation are/is occurring across all sectors, particularly in financial services and general industry conglomerates, aimed at driving cost and process efficiencies and greater revenue-generation potential.

2. There is a healthy retail spending, evident in positive footfalls in shopping malls, further cementing the region's position as an enviable fashion hub.

3. Construction is buoyant, but not just for the sake of building, recognising that property development underpins other industries.

4. The world-class financial free zones, particularly the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), continue to attract firms from within and outside the region, evident in high occupancy rates in these zones.

5. The Dubai Expo 2020 effect is clear, with capital works well underway, and the knock-on effects in many industries already happening (notably, construction, project management, professional services).

6. With Dubai's current airport already the world's busiest, the second airport, Al Maktoum International, once fully completed, will be a game changer, with Emirates relocating there in 2025 and the use of MICE facilities post-Expo 2020.

7. Saudi Vision 2030 is starting to take shape, across a number of industries, with the planned Saudi Aramco IPO set to create the largest entity in the world by market value.

8. Tourism and leisure continue to be in focus, now being enhanced with the growing prevalence of theme parks in the UAE.

9. Institutionalisation of real estate continues apace, with growth in the REIT sector, which will attract more foreign capital.

10. The SME sector should be encouraged by government support for venture capital, and the rise of P2P lending platforms.

11. Fintechs, although a nascent sector, are strongly supported by government at the highest levels, and will play a significant role in supporting and growing the SME sector.

Adam Malouf is a highly experienced, international C-Level senior executive who worked for many years in the Gulf States for multinationals and family offices, in banking, funds management, private equity and corporate advisory. He is also an experienced non-executive director, being a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, the former Chairman of the Australian Business Council – Dubai, and a non-executive director of the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NSW Chapter) and the Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce.

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THE ALCC SPONSORS LUNCHEON

On the 8th Of September, the ALCC hosted its Annual Luncheon in honour of its sponsors which was also attended by Lebanon's Consul General George Bitar Ghanem and members of the media. Chamber President Joe Khattar delivered a thank you message to the sponsors for their ongoing great support to the Chamber.

THE 10TH WORLD CHAMBERS CONGRESS IN SYDNEY 19-21 SEPT 2017

The recent world chambers' congress held at Sydney's international convention centre was organized by the ICC Paris and the NSW Business Chamber...It attracted a large number of chambers from around the world including prominent business leaders who came to Sydney to attend the congress and to play an active role in the various conferences, forums and the exhibition of products and services.

This was a great opportunity for Sydney and NSW to showcase what our wonderful state has to offer. The welcoming Australian atmosphere dominated all the activities and of course this was deeply appreciated by all the visitors and participants.

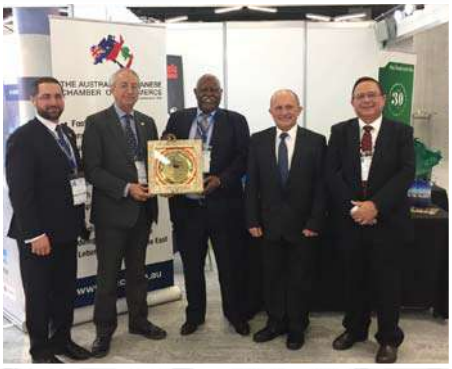
The Australian Lebanese Chamber played a major role by hosting all the MENA delegations for a whole day on the 18th of September. The program began early morning with MC. Ian Bennett and welcoming speeches by Professor Trevor Cairney, President of NSW Business Chamber, followed by Joe Khattar AM, ALCC President. The speakers were Paul Bloxeham Chief Economist HSBC who gave an overview on Australia's sector opportunities, Dr. Andy Marks about the education sector, The Hon. Patricia Forsythe on tourism in Australia and Joe Rizk OAM delivered a talk on advancing Trade and Investment opportunities between Australia and the Middle East and North Africa, the MENA region.

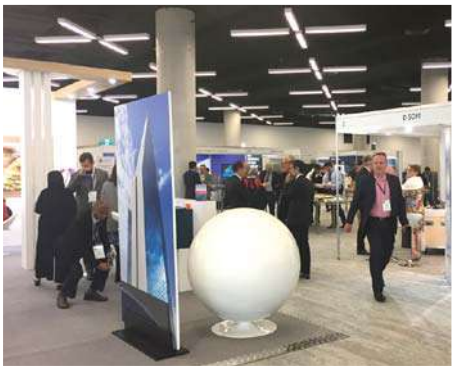
The day's events was followed by a dinner in honour of the Middle East and MENA Delegates which was also attended by the President of the NSW legislative council The Hon. John Ajaka who gave a warm welcome to the visiting delegations and Lebanon's Consul General George Bitar Ghanem. The Secretary General of the Gulf Chambers of Commerce Mr. Abdulrahim Naqi thanked the Chamber for hosting the dinner and expressed the GCC's deep interest to work hand in hand with the ALCC to boost trade and investment between the Gulf States and Australia.

The joint ALCC and Arab Bank booth at the exhibition drew a large number of visitors and considerable attention from those exhibiting as well as various business leaders from around the world. The advice sought by many whether on trade or banking was well received and deeply appreciated, particularly by delegates from the Gulf and Mena region.

The ALCC who worked hand in hand with the NSW Business Chamber for the success of the Congress, is proud of what was achieved and of the strong business relationship between the two Chambers, which will ultimately benefit this great State of ours, New South Wales.

Michael Rizk
Head of Trade Relations
ALCC





WELCOME SPEECH BY ALCC PRESIDENT AT THE MENA OPENING SESSION

This is a special day for Sydney where we, together with the NSW Business Chamber, are working hand in hand to welcome all our dear guests from around the globe ...

Giving us all the opportunity to interact for the benefit of all our various countries ...

To our very distinguished delegates and friends from the MENA region, it is my deep pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce to our wonderful city of Sydney ...

It is an honour to have you here with us, and I sincerely hope that your visit will be a memorable and rewarding one ...

We look forward to many more such visits in the near future, which will undoubtedly strengthen the existing business relationship we have with the MENA region ...

Your visit to NSW to attend the Congress of World Chambers is deeply appreciated by all concerned ...

Once again, I welcome you wholeheartedly on behalf of the Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce ...

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ALCC PRESIDENT'S WELCOMING SPEECH AT THE DINNER IN HONOUR OF THE MENA DELEGATIONS.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an absolute pleasure to welcome all our dear guests from all the Middle East countries to Sydney, and the state of NSW …

This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to further enhance the good business relationship between Australia and the Arab world …

We as an Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, together with our very close associates in the NSW Business Chamber, stand ready, as we have always done, to play our part in strengthening that relationship …

We say this with a lot of confidence due to our long history in promoting and executing trade and investment between Australia and the Arab world …

We are very proud of the fact that the Chamber is able to play that role in a beneficial manner to both Australia and the Arab world due to our long history, experience and permanent physical presence in the region …

We strongly believe that Australia should have a much more effective role in the region as a whole, simply because we have a lot to offer in both products and services and the will to transact with our Middle Eastern counterparts …

We also encourage those of the Australian business community that have never visited the region and have never done business with the Arab world to pay a visit to those countries and to evaluate the potential that does exist in the region …

Our Chamber stands ready to help and guide those interested in any way possible to make their visit a rewarding one …

Distinguished guests, we value and deeply appreciate the great effort you have made to join us in Sydney, and we also thank their Excellencies and Ambassadors and diplomats for their wonderful co-operation and for their presence with us here tonight …

The Chamber is deeply honoured to be hosting this Dinner for you, our honorable guests and your Excellencies ...

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our very helpful local Lebanese media outlets for their ongoing support and reliable coverage of the Chamber's activities to the global market …

Once again, a very warm welcome to all our distinguished guests and we do wish you a very pleasant and rewarding visit to our wonderful city of Sydney ...

Thank you, and please enjoy the evening.

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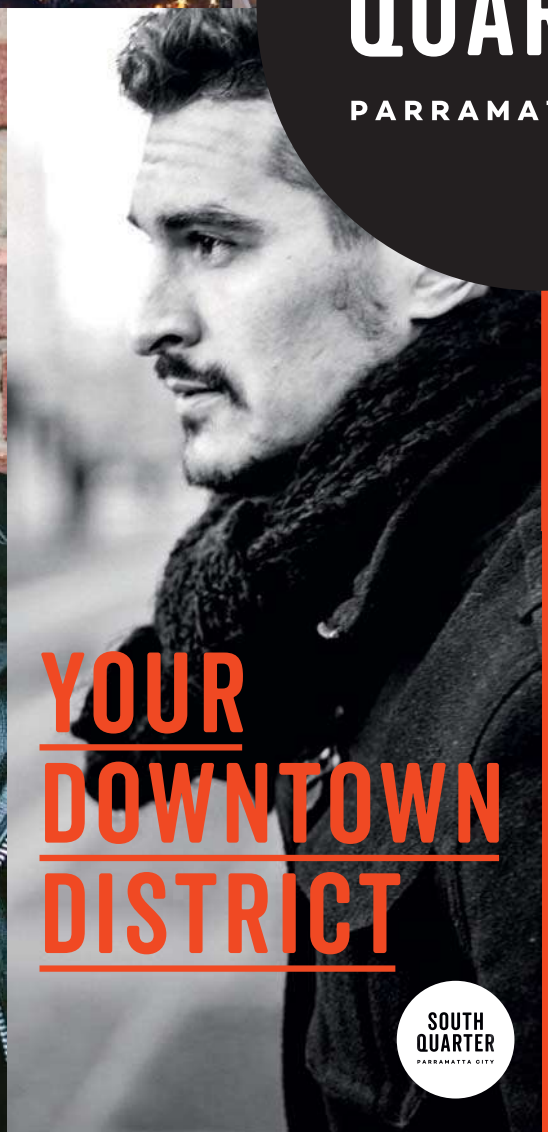

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RBK NUTRACEUTICALS
AN AUSTRALIAN SUCCESS STORY IN BOTH ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

In 1996 RBK Nutraceuticals was established as a three person operation in a small office above a local fish & chip shop in Epping NSW. The three founders James Ro, Kate Ro and David Mumford launched the Mothernest brand and utilised their industry experience and distribution networks to supply premium Australian made health supplements to the world.

The first Mothernest product range was basic consisting of natural health supplements that were in demand in Asian markets, this included Royal Jelly, Propolis, Omega 3 and Squalene.

RBK's first export market was South Korea with distribution in leading luxury department stores such as Lotte, Hyundai and Shinsaegae at the same time RBK also supplied the local market in Sydney International Airport supplying the specialty Australian food stores and other Duty Free outlets.

The early days were a struggle however RBK had clear goals, a plan and the dedication to make it succeed. RBK exhibited at many international trade shows and participated in trade missions in the hopes of establishing new markets and slowly but surely started to grow and has continued to grow now 20 years later.

When establishing new business RBK has always been focused on building long term business with strong relationships being the most important factor. By seeking out like minded business partners who share the same values has enabled RBK to grow as its customers and partners also grow.

During the first 10 years of business RBK established several new health supplement brands to allow for a multi-branding strategy to maintain exclusivity for its customers in certain markets. The product range continued to grow as did export markets including New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippines. The growth was slow and steady as the number of employees grew and new opportunities seized.

In 2012 RBK gained a Therapeutic Goods License to manufacture therapeutic goods as sales & export markets continued to grow. In 2017 RBK employs over 40 people and exports hundreds of products to over 15 countries including China, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Mongolia, USA Saudi Arabia and Sudan.

RBK has established long term business through prestigious retailers. Its international flagship brand, Mothernest widely made available on Korean Air & Asiana Inflight Duty Free, Hotel Lotte Duty Free and DFS Galleria worldwide. RBK's True Blue brand is the top seller at Costco in Korea and is also available at Costco stores in Australia, Taiwan and Japan.

RBK has been recognized and honored for its business growth & development by winning several prestigious Australian awards culminating with the coveted NSW Business Chamber overall State Business of the Year. Other awards won include;

- 2017 Premiers NSW Export Award Finalist Health & Biotechnology
- 2016 Premiers NSW Export Award Western Sydney Exporter Highly Commended
- 2016 AustCham Korea Excellence in Business Award
- 2015 NSW Business Chamber Business of the Year
- 2015 NSW Business Chamber Excellence in Export
- 2014 Western Sydney Awards Business Leader
- 2013 Western Sydney Awards Entrepreneur of the Year
- 2013 Western Sydney Awards Excellence in Export
- 2012 NSW Business Chamber Excellence in Export

The Middle East market was always seen as a great opportunity for RBK with the Sales & Marketing Director, David Mumford making several visits to the United Arab Emirates with no success. However in 2015 David reached out to Camil Gereis from the NSW Business Chamber to provide business matching services for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Camil has a wealth of business experience and contacts in the Middle East and put together a plan to engage with suitable distributors and partners in the region.

In 2015 David and Camil both visited Dubai where Camil introduced many high level contacts who were very interested in working with RBK however the market did appear to be heavily saturated and competitive however in Saudi Arabia is where the most opportunity existed with the right partner.

David's first observations of Saudi Arabia was how open and giving business people were with their time and how important establishing a relationship is before discussing business. Also that strict time schedules and appointment times are not always possible to arrange so flexibility and a willingness to be adaptable is essential.

The other major observation is that the Saudi health supplement market for quality products was at its early growth phase and strong high-quality brands could succeed in the market.

Camil had arranged a series of meetings for David with various government officials including the regulatory authority of Saudi Food and Drug, Chambers of Commerce with many great opportunities developing however it was a meeting with the owner of one of the largest abattoirs and meat and livestock company in Taif where the future business opportunities for RBK would be realised.

The owner liked the Mothernest Vitamin Gummy range and expressed that his youngest son who was completing his studies in University in Perth, and RBK's business should partner to enter the for Saudi Arabian market.

David returned to Saudi Arabia six months later where a legally binding joint venture company was established and commenced the exhaustive product registration process with the Saudi Food & Drug Authority.
Although David is from an Australian / English background he was able to quickly adapt and enjoy the culture and learnt that business opportunities can be found anywhere and to be open to all possibilities. Due to the importance of relationships quite often one meeting leads to an introduction to a friend or family member that then develops into new opportunities.

In June 2017 RBK sent its first exports to Saudi Arabia being Mothernest Vitamin C Candy (Gummies). This product was an instant hit with no added sugar and a higher vitamin than the competitors. Since then additional gummies with calcium and multi-vitamins have been added and the products are currently available in Al-Nahdi, Al-Dawa and United Pharmacies in over 2,000 locations throughout Saudi Arabia.

Product registrations for other Mothernest vitamin health supplements are in the final stages with the Saudi FDA which will be distributed via the existing pharmacy channels and also private hospitals.

Since the successful introduction of Mothernest to Saudi new market opportunities have been created in Qatar, Sudan, Dubai and Turkey where product registrations and discussions with potential distributors are taking place.

RBK is enjoying doing business in the exciting Middle East market as it is a market that truly appreciates quality and long-term relationships where the opportunities for growth and development far exceed any other region in the world.

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FOSTERING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER BETWEEN LEBANON AND SWEDEN

IDAL participated in a 2 day mission to Stockholm that provided us with a comprehensive picture of how Stockholm City has worked to create a knowledge economy and an environment for start-ups to flourish.

Indeed, Sweden is one of the most knowledge-intensive and innovative regions in the world. Stockholm has become a global tech and startup hub and is home to 5 startups worth at least a billion dollars (including Skype, Spotify, King, Mojand, and Klarna) making it the second most prolific tech hub in the world on a per capita right behind Silicon Valley.

During the mission, IDAL discussed a future collaboration with key players that are boosting Stockholm's ICT sector including Startup Stockholm, Sweden's largest advisory center for startups, Kista Science City, the largest ICT cluster in Europe and the 3rd largest ICT cluster in the world, and Ericsson Studio the largest mobile innovator in Europe.

Throughout our visit IDAL also discovered a large pool of untapped Lebanese diaspora members that were able to put their mark on Sweden's ICT and innovation sectors among others, and that are eager to give back to their mother country.

IDAL's INPUT AT THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY PANEL AT THE LDE IN LAS VEGAS

IDAL's contributions to the Lebanese Diaspora Energy (LDE) Conference in Las Vegas were plenty. One of them was through a panel intervention on "Knowledge Economy: Partnerships between the Public, Private, and Educational Institutions" where we emphasized on the country's readiness to delve into the era of knowledge, technology and innovation.

As summary of the panel's recommendations included the following:

1. Encourage young people of Lebanese origins to continue their specialization degree in Lebanon which will give them the opportunity to learn based on the English or French curriculum and expose them to Lebanese culture
2. Rely on Lebanese expatriates' expertise in the field of technology and information to build and develop capacities, which will contribute to putting Lebanon on the map of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
3. Rely on diplomatic means to expand markets for Lebanese in order to reach Lebanese diaspora all over the world.
4. Building networks of Lebanese pioneers among the diaspora in various fields to cooperate with their counterparts in Lebanon in order to develop all economic sectors

Courtesy of IDAL newsletter

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