

NEWS FROM:



BROADER MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT FINANCE CONFERENCE AMMAN JORDAN 2005

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SENIOR GOVERNMENT, CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL LEADERS TO GATHER NEXT WEEK IN AMMAN JORDAN FOR MAJOR REGIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT FINANCE CONFERENCE

AMMAN, JORDAN --- There's an ambitious and unique agenda planned for next week's Broader Middle East and North Africa Trade and Investment Finance Conference in Amman, Jordan, May 17-19, 2005. The Governments of Jordan and the United States will host the Conference --- and if the number of senior officials attending is a measure of potential success, the Conference is already off to an impressive start.

The Conference will be among the largest gatherings of government officials, trade and development agency representatives, and the private sector ever conducted in the Near East region.

The list of attendees includes ministers, corporate CEOs and presidents of financial institutions from throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, North America and Asia.

Attending and participating in presentations at the Conference are ministerial-level officials from a number of nations, including Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, and Yemen.

Also participating in the conference are senior officials of the G-8 export credit and investment finance agencies of the world's major industrial democracies: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as international organizations including the Islamic Development Bank Group; Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investments and Export Credit; World Bank Group; the Berne Union; and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Corporate participants on panels include senior representatives of companies such as telecommunications companies Alcatel, Siemens, and New Generations; Qatar Petroleum; agricultural and construction equipment maker Case New Holland; engineering companies SNC Lavalin, JGC Corporation and Black and Veatch; aerospace manufacturers Boeing and Rolls Royce, as well as Royal Air Maroc and Royal Jordanian Airlines.

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Private sector financial industry firms represented on the Conference program include Arab Banking Corporation (B.S.C.); Coface, a subsidiary of Natexis Banques Populaires and the Banque Populaire Group; Commercial International Bank, Egypt; Export and Finance Bank, Jordan; Euler Hermes, Germany; IBEX-Bank; Mizuho Corporate Bank Ltd.; National Bank of Kuwait; Citigroup; and Zurich Emerging Markets Solutions.

With the cooperation of the G-8 export credit agencies, the Conference addresses key trade, economic development, investment and finance issues in the Broader Middle East and North Africa region, which encompasses Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, West Bank and Gaza, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

The conference builds upon the commitments to economic reform made by the leaders of the G-8 and the Broader Middle East and North Africa region at the June 2004 Sea Island Summit and the subsequent December 2004 *Forum for the Future* meetings held in Morocco.

“The benefits of this conference will last well beyond the three days of events,” said Ex-Im Bank Chairman Philip Merrill. “The interactions among prominent government officials from the 27 governments and private sector executives will serve as a catalyst for economic reform and development in the Broader Middle East and North Africa region. The commitment shown by the convergence of these leaders in Amman demonstrates their commitment to the region and will result in real transactions and real economic growth,” Merrill said.

The program will focus on a broad range of trade-related investment and finance programs and services, as well as sectors including agriculture, information technology, Islamic finance, oil and gas, intellectual property and competition policy, telecommunications, transportation, and water.

The conference will provide a unique opportunity for governments, companies, and financial institutions of the Broader Middle East and North Africa region to discuss key economic reform issues and to interact with major G-8 sources of public and private finance and multinational companies. Anticipated size of the conference is between 300-400 people.

It complements the World Economic Forum meetings being held in Jordan on May 20, 21 and 22.

For the United States, the Conference is sponsored by the Export-Import Bank of the United States, together with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, the Foreign Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Department of State.

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EDITORS NOTE: Registered media will be permitted to cover both plenary sessions and panel discussions, and conference fees (except meals) will be waived. Copies of the agenda are available upon request or may be downloaded at <http://www.exim.gov>. At the conference media may contact Ex-Im Bank Senior V.P. for Communications Brett Decker for assistance.
