



# Middle East Mediterranean

*An ELIAMEP Report*

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Energy**

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*An interview with*

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the Middle East

## Promoting Business: Greece and the Middle East

Greece and the MENA region:  
Lost Economic Opportunities

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Jordan as Gateway to Greek  
Businesses

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# Middle East Mediterranean

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**Middle East Mediterranean (MEM)** is an unbiased bimonthly report of the *ELIAMEP Middle East Research Project*, focusing largely on geopolitical and economic developments, debates as well as policies, affecting the future of the Middle East. Having a global outlook MEM hosts analyses, commentaries, interviews and news, conducting research in the fields of politics, economics and culture in the Middle East and adjacent areas, such as the Eastern Mediterranean.

NOTICE: The views expressed in the articles of the *Middle East Mediterranean* do not reflect the point of view of the Hellenic Institute for European and Foreign Policy and the Editorial Team.

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## Editor's Note

The declining economic situation in Europe and the Balkans and the shift of production and economic vigorousness to Asia, and partially to Latin America, seems to have had a major impact in the worldview of Greek entrepreneurs. The latter have been alarmed by the dramatic change of the economic landscape and are in the process of finding other fields and regions of entrepreneurship both near and far from Greece. As a result, the ongoing improvement of Greek exports seems to result from the orientation of Greeks to the so-called “East,” i.e. to the markets of Asia and North Africa (31.8%), the Caucasus and Central Asia (34.3%), South Asia (30.3%) and China (49%). There has been also an increase to exports to North America by 38.9%.

Nowadays culturally and economically the region of the Middle East is *terra incognita* to Greek businessmen and vice versa. This was not the case in the recent past. Actually the cultural and economic significance of the Middle East has always been quite high in the long history of Greeks. In this context it is necessary to have Arab investments in Greece and in order to have this accomplished Arab companies must be familiarized with the Greek market and society.

There are many investment opportunities presented in Greece in a wide range of sectors, such as tourism, the agricultural-food sector, health services, the shipbuilding sector, renewable energy, new technologies, etc. In this context, care is needed Greek state to strengthen the institutional framework of bilateral economic relations and in particular to ensure investors through bilateral Double Taxation and Mutual Protection of Investments.

The current issue of the Middle East Mediterranean focuses on various aspects (the overall status of relations) and sectors of economy (tourism, health) that Arab and Greek entrepreneurship knows well and can perform successfully in the Greek market with fruitful results on a mutual basis.

*MEM*

## *Analyses*

### Greece and the MENA region: Lost Economic Opportunities

Dr. Saleh Jallad

*Independent Scholar, Athens.*

*Summary: Despite the state of “Creative Anarchy” that has been infesting the MENA region since 2010, Greek entrepreneurs should take the initiative and approach their counterparts in the region with the objective of establishing mutually beneficial long-term economic activities.*

The cultural and economic relationship between Greece and the MENA region since time immemorial has never been as low as it has become since Greece joined the European Union. The degradation in the relationship was even more pronounced after the 2008 financial crisis which was caused by the major international financial institutions and intermediaries that are spread globally. Its effect on the smaller and emerging ecosystems, including Greece, was overwhelming. Though the memory lost a lot of currency since then among experts, regulators and financiers, the ensuing social and economic costs that were

globalized then still linger on in variegated weights as the profits ensuing from the crisis were intelligently and silently privatized by the offenders. Without doubt, the latter effectively, both directly and indirectly, control the flow of the world’s supply and creation of money in all its forms; and money represents the bloodline of all economic, social and political activities anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, the 2008 financial crisis was not a wake-up call for ecosystems like that of Greece, but a blow from which the Greek ecosystem is expected to suffer for a long time.

Various other strategic exogenous and endogenous factors seem to have merged to exacerbate the subsequent economic and political crisis that developed in Greece. What we have observed since then is a continuation of deteriorating economic as well as cultural activities between Greece and the MENA region.

Instead of transforming the challenges created by the economic crisis into mutually beneficial opportunities, Greece the gateway to both the East and Europe, and the MENA region, gateway to the East and Africa, seemed oblivious to seizing the valuable prospects. It is a peculiar state of affairs between two entities characterized by peaceful and positive ties sustained over thousands of years that remain untarnished despite long and brutal colonial experiences; an obvious feature among its counterparts of the EU membership, from which Greece ironically has also greatly suffered.

An analysis of the balance of trade between the entire MENA region and Greece will quickly show the insignificant activities between

them. The data, including oil and gas, exhibits that only a small volume (approximately 3%) of its total trade is transacted with MENA. When hydrocarbon contents are excluded from the trade figures as published by the Greek authorities, the situation looks simply abysmal relative to their mutual compatibilities, their mutual requirements and demand, and their relative cost-effective geographic and cultural proximity. Moreover, if the presence of foreign financial institutions in a country stands as a proxy for the extent of economic relations, then it is perplexing to observe that not a single MENA financial intermediary exists in Greece, contrary to the situation before it became a member of the EU.

Egypt still enjoys the lion's share of the non-hydrocarbon trading activities with Greece, yet the dollar value of the rest of the MENA countries lingers far behind. Population of the MENA region today is more than 360 million and is rising, as is urbanization. Consequently the demand for all

kinds of goods and services, particularly agricultural products, technology, industrial and engineering services has been escalating. Still, the share of Greek exports of such items to the region is relatively very weak given the tremendous potential for the Greek markets, products and qualified labour force. A careful scrutiny of MENA's imports by item and by country over the past ten years summarizes the whole scenario: Greek products do not fair well relative to most other European counterparts. The Greek construction and engineering industries trail behind those of most other nations; Greeks employed in the MENA oil producing countries are relatively few; Greek banking capacity to assist Greek entrepreneurs internationally, other than shipping, is non-existent.

Furthermore, Foreign Direct Investment in Greece by the MENA region, both in relative as well absolute terms, collectively and individually, regardless of whether the source is the private or sovereign sector, relays a similar story; yet is

even more acute. Whatever mechanism was employed to attract foreign direct investment from the financially surplus members of the MENA region, failed to materialize. Moreover, after Greece entered the EU, most of the foreign companies who coordinated their overseas activities from Greece started to withdraw, and some even moved to other EU member countries such as Ireland, England, Spain and Portugal depending on the types of business. Logically, Greece as well as its qualified labour force forfeited real income in addition to opportunities for continuous employment. Simultaneously, many foreign companies maintained their coordinating offices in other EU member countries as their businesses, associated benefits or expectations on one hand and those of the host members intensified on the other. Such a paradox existed even before the debt crisis that overwhelmed the present and future socio-economic path of Greece.

Whether Greece will find a way out in the foreseeable future may be a subject for many debates.

But all economic, social, political and international quantitative and qualitative indicators confirm that, *ceteris paribus*, the volume of debt burden Greece carries on its shoulders is unfathomable and may never be repaid given the prevailing economic and social conditions. This is not a pessimistic postulate; it is an unfortunate fact.

However, despite the dismal situation the challenges can be transformed into profitable opportunities. With public and private cooperation and enforceable positive planning, the Greek entrepreneurial acumen can wisely achieve a positive outcome. Investors and trading partners from the MENA region, are always ready to take a calculated risk if, and only if, they are convinced that an investment and trading regime that is conducive to entrepreneurs and risk takers is installed, communicated, and assured of prompt commercial and legal enforcement, and not subject to whimsical uncertainties. No economic regime can be established in a vacuum, nor are its approved

objectives merely items on a wish list. Such is the case in Greece. It naturally lives and grows within the confines of its socio-political environment. Simultaneously, it is in constant competition with others in Europe or other competing centres of the world.

The spectrum of obstacles is very wide. If there is no mutual will on the part of both MENA and Greece to overcome the situation, the future relationship between them may become precarious at best.

Consequently, an honest review of the Greek Governance paradigm which embodies the factors embracing the process of decision-making, the depth of transparency and the extent of accountability at all levels in the public and the private sectors, is highly recommended. It sets among other objectives the prerequisites for investment and trading activities that ensure sustainable and equitable total growth in Greece. Variations in these intertwined decisive factors, positive or negative, will directly influence the magnitude as well as



the direction of the performance of the Greek ecosystem. Consequently, social and economic changes conducive to elevating the total welfare are required.

Without belabouring the point further, it has been long established by scholars as well as history that Governance breeds the quality of combined public and private leadership required to attain the objectives set by any organization. Good Governance has a higher probability of achieving sustainable socio-economic growth. The reverse is also true. Greece is not an exception. Developing good Governance is a long and tedious process, yet it is still of extreme necessity. It stands as a necessary enabler to reduce the risk and predicaments exemplified in the current economic crisis and concoct the right ways and means to contain socio-economic risks, and finally succeed in overcoming them.

Despite the state of “Creative Anarchy” that has been infesting the MENA region since 2010, I believe Greek entrepreneurs should take the

initiative and approach their counterparts in the region with the objective of establishing mutually beneficial long-term economic activities. Communications, information and data collection constitute a good start. There are many knowledgeable institutions in Greece including the MENA embassies and the Arab-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce that can assist. Greeks are one of the few people that enjoy freedom of travel to the majority of the MENA countries. It is unfortunate that Greece does not reciprocate; however, this is understandable given that it has forfeited its absolute independent decisions on such issues. 🇬🇷

## Jordan as Gateway to Greek Businesses

Dr. Antonia Dimou

*Associate at the Center for Strategic Studies-University of Jordan, RIEAS Senior Advisor, Webster University Instructor*

*Jordan is an attractive place for Greek business and investment whose strategic location has turned it into a regional hub and thus a gateway to reaching third markets.*

Jordan is a free market oriented economy that offers a wide range of incentives to international investors. The kingdom's Investment Promotion Law provides freedoms from customs and duties, unrestricted transfer of capital and profits, and tax income exemptions. Jordan is thus considered as an ideal base of investment braced by its strategic location in the heart of the Middle East that ensures unimpeded access to the markets of Asia and Africa. The growth oriented business environment of the kingdom largely explains the interest of Greek companies either to advance exports or transfer activities and open representation offices for investment security, stability and cash flow reasons.

The timely interest of Greek companies to establish a presence in Jordan is accelerated by the existence of the Qualified Industrial Zones that give products NAFTA-like free access to the American market, and ensure a duty free entry, no quotas and an exquisite

infrastructure. The promotion of Greek products in the Jordanian market is facilitated through a number of agreements signed over the years between the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federation of Greek Industries and the Exporters Association of Northern Greece with the counterpart Jordanian institutions. Also, frequent high-level political visits come to corroborate the constructiveness of interstate relations kindling trade and business partnerships that can yield mutual economic benefits.

The negative trade volume for Greece which exports to Jordan iron wires, plastic, fish, wood, soybean oil, processed petroleum products and foodstuff, can be reversed with the employment of a strategy by Greek companies to tap into rising demand in the kingdom, and breathe life into economic partnerships in the form of joint ventures. Assistive to reinforcing trade is the signing of an agreement on Customs Cooperation and the long-awaited

accord on the Avoidance of Double Taxation.

The business performance between Greece and Jordan confirm that agreements lay the legal framework for sustainable transnational cooperation. It is no secret that the two signed agreements on tourism and the protection of investments as well as the accord on scientific and technological cooperation have been instrumental in the expansion of Greek economic presence in the kingdom.

Over the last decade in particular, a number of Greek companies have been active in infrastructure projects, with most prominent, Aegek that built two dams; J&P/Avax that participated in the operation, maintenance, expansion and rehabilitation project of the Queen Alia International Airport in Amman which consisted the building of a new terminal of a total 90 thousand square meters surface; Eurodrip S.A. that acquired the National Drip Irrigation Company located in Amman to cater to the growing Middle Eastern Markets and introduced "In Line Pressure Compensating Drippers" pipes to Jordan; Exarchou-Nikolopoulos Consulting Engineers Overseas S.A. that provided technical expertise in hydraulics-

hydrology and water supply projects; Intracom Jordan that established partnership with Oracle, a leading supplier of software for information management and the world's second largest applications software company; Metka S.A. that provided engineering, procurement and construction services for the expansion of Samra Thermal Power Station; and, Terna Energy that participated as consortium partner in the building of a wind farm at Al-Kamshah in the Irbid region.

Evidently, Jordan is an attractive place for Greek business and investment whose strategic location has turned it into a regional hub and thus a gateway to reaching third markets. Greece, amid recession and a severe cash crunch, is in need of rapidly expanding its regional business presence so that maximization of value, not complexity, is achieved. In such a time of crisis, Jordan offers to Greek businesses the opportunity to escape from the vicious cycle of recession and expand. An opportunity that must not be neglected because, because as ancient Greek Demosthenes aptly once said; *"Opportunities can often prove to be the beginning of great enterprises".....*

## Comments

### Boosting the field of renewable energy sources

Dr. Evangelos Venetis

*Head of the Middle East Research Project –*

*Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy - ELIAMEP*

*The advantages of an investment in the Greek market include the high usable energy potential of the country, e.g. wind power, sunshine etc; the nature of renewable energy sources, .e.g. the inexhaustible renewable resources; and the introduction of new technologies and the continuous improvement of know-how combined with low operating costs.*

During the period 2002-2014 the total installed units from electricity generation capacity ANA grew at an annual rate of change of 24.2%. But the growth was delayed catalyst from 42.5% in 2012-3 to 3.97% in 2013-4.

In 2014 the installed capacity amounted to 4.816MW. By 2012, the installed wind farm generation capacity accounted for a larger share of RES in total with their share being 53.9% in 2012. Then the power of photovoltaic systems passed the top position. In 2014 photovoltaic parks reached 53.4% (from 1% in 2008) and wind farms was at 41.1%. Small hydropower plants was 4.6% and the

lowest was the contribution of biomass-biogas plants.

Internationally the total installed capacity for electricity production from RES units, including hydroelectric plants, was at 1.560GW 2013, increased by 8.3% compared to 2012. For the first time, adding to the global capacity of solar-photovoltaic sector systems surpassed the corresponding wind systems in 2013. solar-photovoltaic systems show strong growth internationally with an annual rate of 55% over the last five years.

The advantages of an investment in the Greek market include the high usable energy

potential of the country, e.g. wind power, sunshine etc; the nature of renewable energy sources, .e.g. the inexhaustible renewable resources; and the introduction of new technologies and the continuous improvement of know-how combined with low operating costs of RES.

These advantages along with the following opportunities form an attractive package for interested investors: the large growth potential of the examined sector; the operation of the highest energy potential of the islands where the interconnection is completed; the establishment of smart electricity distribution networks, the so-called smart grids; and the interest of foreign investors in the RES of the domestic market.

Yet the weaknesses of such an endeavor include the low level of implementation of investment projects compared with existing capabilities; the delay in the implementation of infrastructure

(electricity networks) that allow seamless penetration of RES; and the saturation of the networks in areas with high energy potential.

In this context investors must not disregard the risks, including the economic downturn and the contraction in bank lending resulting in the postponement / cancellation of significant investments; and the constant changes in legislation and the instability of government strategies leading to a reduction in investor confidence.

Apparently the renewable energy sector is an important parameter for cooperation between Greece and the countries of MENA, as the Greek market is offered to investors in MENA for further development of different RES in Greek territory. The business coordination in this process is essential, as is the direct compliance of Greek state in consequence level fiscal and management in general.

## Arab-Greek cooperation in real estate

Eleftherios Mastrotheodoros, MA

*The Social Media Project*

*ELIAMEP, Yeniköy Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church and School*

*In the Greek real-estate market there is a scope for growth and expansion, as investments lag behind the existing possibilities along with the mobilizing factors of the public sector towards the systematic exploitation of public property, of similar size and market value.*

In the Greek market the decline in the demand for housing is a problem and an opportunity for foreign investment. In 2013 the number of property transactions fell to 24,000 from 148,000 in 2008. However, the gross value added of the sector "Real Estate" recorded an average annual growth rate of 2.4% in 2007-2014. The share of this sector in total gross value added in the country had an upward trend in 2012. During the last two years it has been scaled back.

In contrast, the gross value added of the sector "Construction" had drastic fall in 2007-2014 at an average annual rate of change of -18.2% and consequently the contraction of the industry stake in the total gross value added in the country.

At international level, the real estate market following the general course of the economy is in recession and growth changes, visible in real estate prices. In Europe, the residential real estate markets were declining from 2008 onwards and are not expected to recover earlier than 2016. With the exception of north European countries where there is economic growth in minimal-degree basic and rudimentary growth trend in the property market, the rest of Europe the industry is stagnant and often declining.

In such a context the prospective benefits of the sector in the Greek market are many. There is a scope for growth and expansion, as investments lag behind the existing possibilities along with the mobilizing factors of the public sector towards the systematic exploitation of public property, of similar size and market value.

The opportunities of such an investment include the possible development of demand for holiday / second homes by foreign investors, if normalized conditions in the economy; and the business opportunities in the revaluation of real estate prices lower equilibrium.

By contrast the deficiencies of the Greek real-estate market include the fragmentation of land ownership and impossibility of rational management; the fact that there are many taxes on property; the multifunctional urban / institutional framework and failure to realize large real estate development projects because of bureaucratic and other factors.

As far as the possible threats of such a business investment are concerned it must be noted that the prolonged downturn in the economy

affects key investments in fixed capital creates conditions de-investment and the collapse of real estate prices. There is also the reduction in funding to mortgage lending. Last, nobody should disregard the existence of a large stock of unsold properties which creates great pressure on the land.

As a whole, the underdeveloped state of the Greek real estate market is an opportunity for cooperation Greek and international investment cycles in the holiday estate both coastal and mountain. Despite the burdensome property taxes to be reduced, the Greek real estate market is attractive for residents of the Middle East needs more impetus to the development of cooperation in this field.





## **Focus on Arab-Greek economic relations**

The investment opportunities for foreign investors in Greece cover a wide range of sectors which can be developed further, posing a major source for bilateral economic cooperation and building trust further. In this context, Mr. Rashad Mabger, Secretary General of the Arab-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce focuses in his interview on major issues about economic relations between Arabs and Greeks.

**Q1:** *What do you think of the current status of Arab-Greek economic ties?*

**A1:** As far as Arab-Greek economic ties are concerned, and based on the national statistical data in terms of exports and imports, one can see the increase of the balance of trade in favour of Greece, except for petroleum and oil products. Especially during the last four years, the Greek companies have been successful in introducing new products and opening new markets in the Arab world.

**Q2:** *What is the outcome of the recent Fourth Arab-Hellenic Economic Forum on 03-04/6/2015?*

**A2.** The 4<sup>th</sup> Arab-Hellenic Economic Forum provided the appropriate

platform for getting the Arab and Greek businessmen together. In terms of practical results, the B2B meetings that took place proved very fruitful and the level of success can be measured by the number of companies that attended from both sides. Additionally, the business sectors that were discussed during the sessions of the Forum created a good opportunity for getting to know who-is-who and for networking. We trust that our Chamber's role as a promoter of stronger business ties between Arabs and Greeks will contribute to positive results in creating new partnerships and cooperation.



**Q3:** *What is the future of Arab-Greek cooperation in the following sectors: constructions, food, agriculture, tourism, shipping and energy?*

**A3:** During 2014 alone, the Arab-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce and Development managed to invite more than 150 businessmen from the Arab World for B2B meetings with their Greek counterparts. These meetings involved all business sectors, not only the ones indicated in your question. However, we all know that Greece has made quite positive strides in the sectors you mentioned, especially in the construction and building material fields. Responding to the demands of our times and the increasing number of construction projects in the Arab world, the Arab-Hellenic Chamber is preparing to provide its assistance to the Greek business community by publishing a comprehensive Directory of companies from Greece and the Arab world in “Engineering, Construction and Building Material”, due for publication by the end of the year.

**Q4:** *Having in mind the unstable geopolitical environment in the Middle East, are Greek companies active in investing in the region? If so, what are their main areas of interest?*

**A4:** Despite the current turmoil in many parts of the Middle East, many Greek companies have managed to penetrate new markets or increase their share in the existing ones in other areas of the Arab world, such as the Gulf or North Africa. The balance of trade since 2012 between Greece and the Arab countries has been increasing while, in terms of Greek companies investing in the region, we witness a rising interest in some countries, such as Egypt, especially in the financial and other industries.

**Q5:** *Given the ongoing economic crisis in Greece, are Arab companies eager to invest in Greece today and in what field? Do they view the crisis as an obstacle or an opportunity? Have the difficulties that Arab investors face in Greece been adequately addressed by the Greek state and entrepreneurs? What are your suggestions for overcoming these difficulties?*

**A5:** A major criterion for any investment is the consistence of

related investment laws, favorable taxation and the reduction of bureaucracy. At the moment, Greece has a lot of investment opportunities to offer because the crisis has led to better prices, a fact which is always welcome by investors. There is, however, the need of certain reforms for the amelioration of the environment in order to attract more interested parties, Arabs or otherwise.

**Q6:** *What would you advise the prospective Greek companies wishing to invest in the Arab world?*

**A6:** In the Arab world, there exists an abundance of investment opportunities in all business sectors and, fortunately enough, the related investment laws are quite encouraging. Furthermore, the formation and registration of a company are made easy as a process. We would, therefore, definitely advise the Greek companies to explore the possibilities provided in the Arab countries and take advantage of the momentum created in one sector or the other.

**Q7:** *How do Arab investors view the Eurozone crisis in Greece? Do they view this crisis as an opportunity for boosting or diminishing economic activity in Greece?*

**A7:** Arab Investment Houses and companies interested in investing in Greece are aware of the investment opportunities the country is offering, especially in tourism and real estate. However the urgent necessity in Greece is the reduction of the enormous bureaucracy, the creation of a stable environment for taxation laws and registration of companies, the speeding-up of the necessary procedures for the creation of bank accounts and the overall facilitation of the prospective investors in terms of all the prerequisites, such as the entering visas, the registration of companies etc. Taxation legislation should also be made flexible and appealing.

**Q8:** *Has economic cooperation between Palestine and Greece improved since the 1<sup>st</sup> Greek-Palestinian Economic Forum (8-9/11/2012)? What steps could be taken to boost ties in this regard?*

**A8:** The initiative taken by Palestinian businessmen to establish contacts with their Greek counterparts is an on-going process and the first Palestinian Conference falls into this category, being an initiative of the Palestinian Greek Association for Economic Cooperation, with the Arab-Hellenic Chamber undertaking the organization of the event. Since then, we have received two Palestinian Business Delegations, one for B2B meetings in 2014 and another one during the 4<sup>th</sup> Arab-Hellenic Economic Forum. We hope that in the near future we will see similar activities directed towards an improvement in the import-export index between the State of Palestine and Greece.

**Q9:** *What are your future plans in terms of activities in order to boost economic ties further?*

**A9:** As it has already been announced, in November 2015 the

Arab-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce and Development is organizing a Business Delegation to the United Arab Emirates and, for the first time, it is aimed to visit four Chambers of Commerce in four cities of the UAE. Also, as mentioned earlier, our Chamber is planning the publication of the “Engineering, Construction and Building Material Directory”. As for our plans for next year, we are looking forward to intensifying our lines of activities to create new partnerships and enhancing the existing business and friendly relations between Greece and the Arab world. Concluding, I would like to stress the fact that the Arab-Greek relations are on very good terms and the fertile ground is always there. It is an on-going process towards improvement on the basis of mutual respect and understanding and we trust that it will continue to be so for years to come.

## Monitoring the Middle East

### *General News*

#### Cyprus

##### **Cyprus-Iraq MoU signed** (11 June, 2015)

Welcomes the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Cyprus and Iraq, this morning, by the ambassadors of both countries in Athens, expressed the ambassador of Cyprus Kyriakos Kenevezos, stressing that it is the first step towards the further strengthening of bilateral relations. On the other hand, the ambassador of Iraq Bourchant Jaffa noted that the MOU, which provides for consultations between the two Foreign Ministries, signed at an important time for the country and expressed the expectation that it will play a positive role and will strengthen cooperation in regional and international level and in international organizations.

#### Egypt

##### **Morsi's death sentence announced** (17 June, 2015)

The death sentence of former Egyptian President, Mohamed Morsi, was issued yesterday by the Cairo Criminal Court, after receiving the approval of the great Mufti, for the categories of complained the trial of "Escape from prison". Along with the former president sentenced to death, the general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Badie, his deputy, RashadEl- Bayoumi, o Mohiy Hamed, a member of the Office of tutor, the president of the dissolved Parliament, Mohamed Saad El-Katatni and a leading Brotherhood member Essam El-Erian. The indictment of the trial included assault in prisons, attacks on security

installations and murdering police during the revolution of January 2011. Additionally, the court sentenced 20 defendants to life imprisonment in absentia to death and 93 others evaded.

## Iran

### **Iran prevents cyber attack against its Oil Ministry (26 May, 2015)**

Iran announced today that prevented cyber attack against the Ministry of Oil, the perpetrators of which reportedly are based in the US. The special center against cyber "failed to prevent attack by hackers against the Ministry of Oil," said strategist Kamal Chantianfar, leader of the police service responsible for combating cybercrime, according to the Fars news agency. "The IP address of hackers in the USA," said Iranian Gen. adding that informed the American authorities and to communicate its "international legal order." The attack took place between 21 and 24 March, during the holiday of the Iranian New Year, in accordance with General Chantianfar. The Iranian year starts on March 20.

## Iraq

### **Yezidis in retaliation kill Sunni Iraqi villagers (11 June, 2015)**

Members of minority Yazid in Iraq, one of the minorities that have suffered most from the violence of extremist organization Islamic State (IK), killed January 21 Sunni Arab villagers to retaliate for an attack, said Amnesty International today. The report, which also referred to other massacres due to religious reasons, released today to coincide with the first anniversary of flash attack IK in Iraq. The non-governmental organization, which is headquartered in London, conducted research on the attacks that took place on January 25 by a militia Yazid in Jiri and Simpagia two Sunni villages in Sintzar, in the northwestern part of the country.

## Lebanon

### **Nasrallah acknowledges publicly Hezbollah fighting in Syria** (25 May, 2015)

The leader of the Lebanese Shiite organization Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah, admitted today for the first time that his movement is fighting everywhere in Syria rebels and Sunni jihadist organization Islamic State (IK), which represents according to him an "existential danger" which requires a sacred union. The scope, violence does not seem to subside. In Damascus, a senior official was killed in an attack on the liability for which undertook Islamist rebels, while a military helicopter crashed in the province of Aleppo (northern Syria). The IK claimed that it shot down, while the official television spoke of "technical failure".

## Libya

### **Belmochtar killed in Libya** (14 June, 2015)

The recognized government of Libya announced yesterday that the Algerian Mokhtar Belmochtar fighter killed in a US air strike inside Libya, as part of a mission of cooperation against terrorism. Earlier, the Pentagon stated that US military forces held yesterday night "anti-terrorist strike" against a person associated with Al Qaeda in Libya. "The government of Libya in the east of Libya confirms that American warplanes waged air strikes yesterday night on a mission that resulted in the death of terrorist Belmochtar" said the recognized government of the country.

## Nigeria

### **Boko Haram in new attacks in SE Nigeria** (19 June, 2015)

Jihadists armed Islamist group Boko Haram of Nigeria launched an attack during the night in two villages in the southern province of Diffa in Niger, killing at least 30 civilians, according to two sources of the security forces. According to the same sources, the assailants stormed the villages in Gkeskerou area with cars and

motorcycles and shot residents before firing in mostly thatched houses of the village, where other residents hiding. A total of "at least 30 people were killed. Some of the victims died when their houses were set on fire, "said one of the officials of the security forces. He added that the death toll is expected to rise because many of the survivors have suffered severe burns. The Gkeskerou area is located along the riverbank Komantougkou separating Niger from Nigeria. Despite regional military operation to kill Boca Haram, many areas in the southern Niger have received dozens of attacks this year. The country's government has declared the area a state of emergency, arresting more than 600 people accused of links with the organization.

## Palestine - Israel

### **Extremist Jews torch Palestinian Christian church in Galilee** (19 May, 2015)

Torched church in Sea of Galilee, where 'Jesus multiplied fish to pleased by 5000 people ", an alleged hate attack." Two people had breathing problems from smoke inhalation, were found scrawled Hebrew graffiti on the spot where Christians believe Jesus gave food to 5,000 people (by multiplying five loaves and two fish. This morning a fire broke out in the church multiplication [of loaves and fish], Sea of Galilee, .The police believes that it is arson. Fire trucks put out the fire, but two people who were in the building were affected by respiratory problems due to smoke inhalation. At the entrance of the building, where it is believed by Christians to have been the miracle of the multiplication of fish and loaves, they found graffiti in Hebrew with the quote "false gods will be eliminated." The church was not caused material injury as the fire raged mainly in the roof. Some damage was caused to the library, offices, and a banquet room. The church, which is run by the Catholic Order of Benedictine, is known for its famous mosaics of the fifth century, including one that depicts two fish to frame a bread basket.

Right-wing extremist Jews have previously made numerous arson and attacks against Christian sites and property against Arabs in the West Bank and Jerusalem in the 'retaliation'. The term "retaliation" is used by Jewish extremists to describe vandalism or attacks against non-Jews or their property. Lieutenant Santi Chaloul said in P / S ED that those responsible for the fire they are wrong if they believe that these actions serve their purposes. Chaloul also stressed that these zealous Jews clearly do not represent all Jews. They are criminals who should be imprisoned and not to walk freely.

## Saudi Arabia

### **Islamic State attacks Shiite mosque in Saudi Arabia** (30 May, 2015)

The Sunni Wahabi Mujahedin organization Islamic State assumed responsibility for attack that occurred today at Shiite mosque in the city of Dammam Saudi Arabia, in which four people were killed. An announcement of the Islamic State posted on Twitter says the suicide bomber who carried out the attack is Abu Τζανταλ αλ-Tzizraoui and adds that he tried to reach the target despite the increased security measures.

## Somalia

### **Al-Shabab attack kills eight policemen in Mogadishu** (20 May, 2015)

The armed Islamist organization Al Shabab in Somalia killed at least eight policemen in a raid carried out by police section near the capital Mogadishu, announced today the police and Islamist group. "My Al Sempamp killed eight colleagues and stole three cars us," he said policeman Ampntikantir Hussein told Reuters by Afgkoi. Al Sempamp which seeks the overthrow supported by the West Government of Mogadishu, claimed responsibility for the attack in Afgkoi city, located 30 kilometers southwest of Mogadishu.



## Syria

### **Tel Abiad under Kurdish control** (19 June, 2015)

The Kurdish forces in Syria have raised today under their complete control over the city Tel Abiad, on the border with Turkey, which had fallen into the hands of the jihadist organization Islamic State, announced the Syrian Human Rights Observatory. Important transit point for jihadists between Turkey and Syria, the Tal Ampiant "is under the full control of Kurdish fighters," said the director of the Observatory Rami Abdel Rahman stated that "has not been heard dropping fire from the morning." The Tal Ampiant in the province Pakala which is a stronghold of IK in Syria, was one of the top two informal crossings with Turkey through which the extremist organization was trafficking weapons and fighters. At the border this, the IR now left the crossing point in the city Tzarampoulous, in the northern province of Aleppo and secondary diodes.

## Tunisia

### **Tunisia closes its consulate in Tripoli, Libya** (20 June, 2015)

Tunisia announced today that it closed the consulate in Tripoli after release ten employees who were kidnapped last week an armed militia Fatzr Libby, the organization that controls capital of Libya. "After this serious incident (the kidnapping of the consulate staff on 12 June) decided to close the consulate in Tripoli " said Foreign Minister Tagiemp Baku from a military airport Tunis where they arrived this morning some of the officials consulate. Tunisia no longer have

an embassy in Tripoli, which in August 2014 is under the control of militias of Fatzr Libby and unrecognized their government. Tunis had decided, however, the last April to reopen a consulate in parallel with the operation another in the areas controlled by the internationally recognized principles, which installed in eastern Libya.

## Turkey

### **Erdogan on Morsi's death sentence in Egypt** (18 June, 2015)

The death sentence imposed on ousted Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi and Muslim Brotherhood leaders are "a massacre of law and fundamental rights," he said today Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "We urge the international community to act to prevent the implementation of these death sentences, which were imposed during the dictation of the coup regime and put an end to this path, which could seriously endanger peace in the Egyptian society" Erdogan said in a statement.

## Yemen

### **Saudi airstrikes in Yemen kill 19 people** (10 June, 2015)

New air strikes alliance led by Saudi Arabia unleashed today thereby killed at least 19 people across Yemen, according to sources in the country, a day after Riyadh announced that artillery shells evlithisan from the territory of Yemen They killed two Saudi soldiers. The fighting occurred in the midst of the ongoing preparations to attend delegations of the exiled government of Yemen Shiite rebel Hutu who are considered backed by Iran, and the former president of the country Ali Abdullah Saleh in Geneva for peace negotiations in Geneva next week.

### **Al-Qaeda leader dies by US drone attack (16 June, 2015)**

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula confirmed the death of its leader Nasser al-Ouachisi in a video of a drone attack that has hung on the Internet. The Ouachisi "was killed in a US drone strike, whose target was, along with two other mujahideen," said a member of the organization in a message posted on YouTube by Al Malahem, the propaganda organ of Al-Qaeda, specifying that the organization appointed in place of the former military commander Qasim al-Raimi..

## *Economy News*

### Algeria

#### **Central Algeria Trade Port project valued at DZD200 bn.** (28 June, 2015)

Central Algeria Trade Port project, to be carried out between the towns of Chercell (Tipaza) and Tenes (Chlef), has been estimated at about DZD200 billion, Minister of Transport Boudjema Talai told APS. The major facility project, to be executed in three stages in ten years, will not be financed by the government, the minister said, adding that the detailed design study is still under way. The ministry of Transport is studying the financing modes.

### Bahrain

#### **Foreign investment in Bahrain hits \$1bn** (26, June 2015)

Inward foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bahrain was nearly \$1 billion at the end of last year, a report has found. The United Nations Conference of Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) World Investment Report 2015, launched regionally at the Ramee Grand Hotel in Seef yesterday, shows that FDI remained at a similar level in 2014 as in 2013, (2014: \$957 million; 2013: \$989 million). As a percentage of GDP (55.4 per cent), Bahrain's inward FDI stocks, which reached \$18.8 billion last year, remained the highest in the GCC and well above the global average, emphasising Bahrain's position as one of the region's most open economies, Economic Development Board (EDB) chief executive Khalid Al Rumaihi said at the launch.

## Cyprus

### **Developments on gas deposit “Venus” (15 June, 2015)**

The commercial exploitation of the deposit plan "Venus" by the piece 12 of the Cypriot EEZ, prepared by the Noble company and will be delivered to the Cypriot Energy Minister George Lakkotrypi reveals in the current edition of the "Economic Daily" Cyprus. In Scheme Development and Production of the deposit, as headed shot, described in detail the manner and method of operating natural gas quantities. The production and channeling the markets will start from 2019 to 2020 by underwater pipelines to regional markets. As buyers "are exposed" Egypt, Jordan and Cyprus. The Plan described and steps to be taken by the Cypriot government and Noble until the sale of natural gas. The first contracts will be signed after the operating license, which is expected to take the Noble.

## Egypt

### **Egyptian Resorts Company to build solar station (26 June, 2015)**

The Egyptian Resorts Company (ERC) has signed a 27-year contract with KarmSolar company to build a solar station in Hurghada region at an investment of \$2.5 million, said a report. The 2MW solar station will be constructed on 50,000 sq m area at Sahl Hasheesh, a commercial and residential area located 18 km south of Hurghada International Airport, reported the Daily News Egypt. The operations and production will kick off in the second half of 2016, it added.

## Iraq

### **Iraq’s way to rebuilding its oil industry is full of hurdles (21 June, 2015)**

Continuing the analysis from the presentations submitted at the Iraqi Forum for Intellectuals and Academics, held in Istanbul last May, we take up the state of the upstream oil and gas in the north and west of Iraq. This is based on what Sharif

Mohsen Ali, former director-general of Internal Control and Auditing at Iraq's Ministry of Oil said at the event.

The present violence situation in Iraq rendered large swaths outside of the control of the central government. This is reflected in the fact that the government in one way or another has lost control of the oil and gas fields, especially in the north and west. The Kirkuk fields (Kirkuk, Jambour, Bai Hasan and Khabbaz) are now largely controlled by the Kurdish Peshmerga, the military arm of the KRG, as they took advantage of the fall of Mosul and the advance of the Daesh to occupy Kirkuk and its oilfields.

## Jordan

### **World Bank supporting solar energy projects in Jordan** (25 June, 2015)

The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), the political risk insurance and credit enhancement arm of the World Bank Group, is backing the development, construction and operation of four solar power projects in Jordan, adding 50 megawatts of clean, renewable energy generation capacity to the country's grid. The plants in Maan and Mafraq benefit from a 20-year power purchase agreement with the National Electric Power Company, according to a MIGA statement released Wednesday. MIGA's investment guarantees of \$15.6 million cover equity investments by private-equity fund Adenium Solar Jordan for up to 20 years against the risks of transfer restriction, expropriation, breach of contract, and war and civil disturbance, the statement said. The World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation is also supporting the projects as a lender.

## Kuwait

### **Kuwait steps up to cut through bureaucratic red-tape** (24 June, 2015)

It has been promising to see that Kuwait has taken further steps towards becoming a world-class commercial and financial regional hub for local and

foreign companies. A number of recent changes have been designed to improve Kuwait's overall investment climate, and fostering its competitiveness, as showcased by the passing of several new economic laws, including the Direct Investment Promotion Law as well as the recent reduction of minimum capital requirements for all entities.

For businesses, one of the most exciting aspects of the Direct Investment Law is the one-stop shop for business registration. The Law provides that the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority will have a specialised unit comprising of officials from the various relevant government departments, They will, in coordination with KDIPA, assist with the establishment and licensing for such entities — an effort that aims to cut through the tremendous bureaucratic red-tape.

## Lebanon

### **From its new HQ, Credit Libanais eyes Africa** (27 June, 2015)

Credit Libanais' decision to move its headquarters to a new \$120 million smart building in Adlieh signals the bank's long-term goal of cementing its presence in Lebanon while continuing expansion abroad in promising markets such as Africa, the bank's chairman says.

## Oman

### **German MDT wins major Orpic contract** (26 June, 2015)

Germany's MAN Diesel & Turbo (MDT) said it won a large shutdown engineering project contract from Oman Oil Refineries and Petroleum Industries Company (Orpic) for its refinery in Sohar. Under this multi-million dollar contract, the German power and process engineering solutions provider will support Orpic's major maintenance turnaround during the first quarter of 2016. The scope of work includes replacement of a regenerator head with a huge diameter and a steel

weight of 250 tonnes besides installation of internal domes, said the German company.

## Palestine - Israel

### **Netanyahu: Israel advances in gas extraction (19 June, 2015)**

Netanyahu pledged to open the extraction of natural gas reserves of Israel, rejecting the arguments against the monopoly gas which called demagoguery, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. According to the Israeli website Globes informational Mr. Netanyahu undertook to promote the compromise setting for the gas industry quickly, before the discussion of the Cabinet. The gas industry in Israel was targeted by the country's Competition Commission which considered that the control of the companies Noble Energy, Delek Drilling and Avner Oil Exploration in gas reserves create monopoly situations and may lead to high selling prices of natural gas in domestic market. This development is delaying the exploitation of mineral deposits "Leviathan" and "Tamar". It recalled that the companies Noble, Delek and Avner are also partners in the deposit "Aphrodite" the piece "12" of the Cypriot EEZ .

## Qatar

### **Arcadis wins \$22.5m Doha Metro deal (31 March, 2015)**

Arcadis, the world's top natural and built asset design & consultancy firm announced that it has clinched the €20m (\$22.5m) deal to provide architectural, branding, design and construction consultancy services for the Gold Line metro line in Doha. The appointment follows an earlier involvement on comparable activities on the Red Line South metro line, also in Doha. For the Gold Line project Arcadis will work on behalf of the contractor, ALYSJ JV, a joint venture of several international and local construction and engineering firms. The ultimate client for the project is the Qatar Rail Company.



## Saudi Arabia

### **Saudis takes 50 Airbus planes in \$8.2bn Islamic leasing deal** (25 June, 2015)

Saudi Arabian Airlines will take delivery of 50 aircraft from Airbus in the largest aviation deal to be secured via Islamic financing, as the European plane-maker tries to gain an edge over rival Boeing in the key Gulf aviation market. Airbus announced the deal at the Paris Air show earlier this month, which includes 30 A320neo planes and 20 A330-300 Regional aircraft worth around \$8.2 billion based on list prices.

## UAE

### **Foreign ownership sparks Etisalat buying frenzy** (25 March, 2015)

The rush to buy stock in the Arab world's second-biggest telecoms provider before it opens to foreign investors sent the number of shares traded to the highest in 17 months within the first 30 minutes of trading. Investors exchanged about 7.5 million shares of Emirates Telecommunications Corp. as of 10:30 a.m. in Abu Dhabi, triple the 12-month daily average and the most since February 2014. It rose to 13.8 million at the close. The stock climbed 5.1 percent to the highest since May 2008, bringing its increase to 21 percent since the company said late Monday that the United Arab Emirates' government agreed to allow foreign ownership of shares. Abu Dhabi's ADX General Index rose 1.4 percent Wednesday.



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