

# **Abu Dhabi - Italy : Investment & Business Forum**

Abu Dhabi 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> May 2006

Round Table On:  
**"Banking System"**  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2006

**Emirates Banks Association**

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General Manager

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Ladies & Gentlemen  
Good Afternoon,

On behalf of Emirates Banks Association, it gives me great pleasure to welcome our guests from Italy, with many thanks for organizing this forum in Abu Dhabi.

### **UAE Banking Sector:**

Our banking sector in the United Arab Emirates is one of the most important sectors of the country economy, and considered as a pillar for all sectors that depending basically on this sector for financing their activities and requirements.

All sectors are achieving continues noticeable progress and great growth.

We have 46 Commercial Banks operating in the UAE (21 National Banks & 25 Foreign Banks) with total 564 branches. Out of the 21 National Banks, 14 Banks have been listed among the top 1000 World Banks, and 18 Banks among the top 100 Arab Banks.

The number of Employees in Banks as at the end of 2005 was 23600 – excluding auxiliary staff –, around 30% are of UAE citizens.

This number of commercial Banks is in addition to:  
51 Representative offices of Foreign Banks, 2 Investment Banks, 2 Specialized Banks, 7 Finance Companies, 2 Development Institutions, and 2 Investment Institutions.

### **Emirates Banks Association:**

\***Establishment:** The Emirates Banks Association was established in 1982 as one of the Societies of Public Interest in the UAE.

\* **Objectives:** The constitution of the association defined its objectives as follow:

- 1- To Promote cooperation and harmony among the member banks.
- 2- To develop and represent the interests of the member banks and organize their obligations and defend their rights.
- 3- To exchange opinions and knowledge in order to serve the interests of the member banks and coordinate exchange of information and opinions on all matters that concern banks and those in the banking profession.
- 4- To exchange banking financial and monetary information in regional and international fields.
- 5- To establish a Training & Research Centre and encourage nationals to join the banking profession .
- 6- To extend assistance and provide service to the members and those working in the banking profession.
- 7- To coordinate cooperation in the field of banking procedures and in legal, technical and administrative affairs, in addition to find solutions to the problems encountered by banks and those working in the banking profession.
- 8- To publish news bulletins and periodicals and to publish books and booklets on topics which concern the Association and those working in the banking profession.
- 9- To carry out all the other works the Association deems necessary in the interest of its members.

\* **Membership** : For membership, E.B.A. accept any bank operating in the country having a license from the Central Bank of the UAE, or specialized banks established in accordance with a government resolution under a special law or decree.

\* **Some Activities:** ❖ The Association is a member in several National committees of concern in the country such as:

- The UAE National Committee of WTO.
- The HR development committee in the Banking sector.
- Shared the membership of The Founding Committee of the UAE National Committee for International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

The Association is an observer member of Union of Arab Banks, and nominates the member representing UAE Banks at the Board of Directors of this Union.

❖ The Board of Directors of the Association used to look into the comments, referred to by any of the Association committees i.e., Legal Consultation Committee, Technical Committee...ets, on topics suggested by any member bank, discussing such comments before raising the suitable recommendations to the Central Bank or any other concerned authority.

❖ The association used to be approached or invited to exchange views on concerned subjects with different local authorities;

The Central Bank of the UAE, The Federal National Council (The UAE Parliament), other Ministries, and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, as well as International Parties; IMF/World Bank Joint Mission (Financial Sector Assessment Program), International

Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Money Laundering, and several Banks Associations and Unions in other countries.

- ❖ E.B.A. - supported by the Central Bank - had undertaken, and succeeded to switch banks and other financial institutions in the country to SWIFT services since 1992, starting with 13 banks that time, while there are 57 users for the time being. The Association still taking the responsibilities for coordination between SWIFT User Group (UAE) and SWIFT Management, including the procedures to facilitate the joining of new users to the service.

The SWIFTNet Traffic messages conducted in the UAE represent around 50% of those in the GCC countries.

The statistics of SWIFTNet Traffic by region in 2005, revealed that the UAE was No. 2 among the top Ten Countries in Africa & The Middle East.

- ❖ In 2004, E.B.A. launched “The Charter of Banking Business in the UAE” which mentioned that its provisions ascertain and denote the internationally recognized banking standard principles in general, and that in consistence with local circumstances in particular.

The IFC program manager of the (Corporate Governance / MENA), and the consultation team assigned to prepare a Handbook / Guidelines for UAE Bank Directors, praised the role of the Association and its initiative to the issuance of this Charter which expressed the morality of banking business in implementation of good corporate governance.

**Others:**

It would be useful to mention that we have The Emirates Institute for Banking and Financial Studies (EIBFS) established in 1983, as a national institution that concern with training and education specialized in Banking & Finance. Emirates Banks Association shared in founding this institute, and the Chairman of the Association was nominated to preside it at the preparatory period and for many years.

EIBFS provides quality programs in accordance with the international standards. High quality academic and professional programs are offered with the latest technologies applications among the strong contacts the EIBFS has got with some regional and international reputed institutes, colleges, and universities.

Thank you, and wishing you good and pleasant stay in the United Arab Emirates.

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