

## PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Laura Hodges  
Tel: +44 (0) 207 7549 1672  
Mobile: +44 (0) 7725 325425

### **City of London & GCC Conference brings together key players in international financial markets**

*The Middle East Association (MEA) in partnership with the City of London Corporation will be staging the third annual City and Gulf Co-operation Council Countries (GCC) Conference at Merchant Taylor's Hall in London on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008.*

For the third year running, this premier event will bring together key players from within the financial communities of the City of London and the GCC countries. Lead sponsors this year include Bahrain Economic Development Board, Qatar Financial Centre Authority and Emirates National Bank of Dubai.

This year the keynote address will be delivered by The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of The City of London Alderman David Lewis, with other high profile government and financial sector representatives from the UK and GCC addressing the Conference.

The main areas of focus at this year's Conference include:

- Regulation and risk based supervision in the context of the global credit crunch: GCC and London perspectives
- Building strong foundations for GCC growth: the financing and skills challenge
- Growing global impact of Islamic finance and insurance: UK and GCC synergies
- GCC investment flows to third markets and role of sovereign wealth funds

Jason Peers, Chairman of the MEA GCC region commented: "The City and GCC Countries Conference has established itself as a key element in the flourishing relationship between the City of London and the markets of the GCC. Discussions at the Conference will be even more relevant this year given the rapidly changing relationship between the major global economies and financial institutions, and the increasingly powerful and self confident economies and institutions in the Gulf."

He added: "With Western economies experiencing a financial correction and an increasing volume of capital coming from emerging markets, global interdependence is becoming even more important. This Conference allows senior finance professionals to look to the Gulf economic markets for long-term stability and growth."

"The Conference will bring together the dynamism of the Gulf within the maturity of the City of London," said Michael Thomas, Director General of the Middle East Association. "It will be an excellent and high-level networking opportunity."

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## Notes to Editors:

1. Any journalist wishing to attend this event must be accredited in advance of the Conference. Please contact Laura Hodges at Pendry White on 020 7549 1672 or 01892 506923 / e-mail: [lhodges@pendrywhite.com](mailto:lhodges@pendrywhite.com).
2. The Middle East Association (MEA) is the UK's premier organisation for promoting trade and relations with the Middle East, North Africa, Turkey and Iran. Its members cover all sectors of industry and commerce including: Banking, Financial, Law, Consultancy, Manufacturing, Retail, Education and Training, and are responsible for the vast majority of all UK investment and trade with the region. For more information visit [www.the-mea.co.uk](http://www.the-mea.co.uk)
3. Conference Lead Sponsor - Bahrain Economic Development Board:  
The Bahrain Economic Development Board is a dynamic public agency with overall responsibility for formulating and overseeing the economic development strategy of Bahrain, and for creating the right climate to attract direct investment into the Kingdom. Bahrain Financial Services is a department of the Economic Development Board that is uniquely dedicated to the needs of the financial services industry. Its role is to increase the international profile of Bahrain as a leading financial and business destination and to provide a single point of contact for international financial services firms looking to build a base in the Kingdom. For more information visit [www.bahrainedb.com](http://www.bahrainedb.com)
4. Conference Lead Sponsor - Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) Authority:  
The QFC Authority is the commercial, administrative and legislative body of the QFC which is responsible for driving its commercial strategy, developing its commercial laws and forging relationships with the global corporate community and other key institutions both within and outside of Qatar. The QFC is a financial and business centre established by the Government of Qatar and located in Doha. It has been designed to attract international financial services institutions and major multi-national corporations and to encourage participation in the growing market for financial services in Qatar and elsewhere in the region. The QFC was created by Qatar Law No. (7) and has been open for business since 1 May 2005. For more information visit [www.qfc.com.qa](http://www.qfc.com.qa)
5. Conference Lead Sponsor - Emirates National Bank Dubai:  
Emirates NBD is a Dubai-based banking group resulting from the merger of Emirates Bank Group and National Bank of Dubai Group. It is the biggest banking group in the GCC by assets and the biggest banking group in the UAE by market capitalization. The Group has a leading retail banking franchise in the UAE, with over 100 branches and over 430 ATMs. It is a major player in the UAE corporate banking arena, with a combined market share of almost a fifth of corporate loans. It also has strong Islamic banking, investment banking, private banking, asset management, and brokerage operations.
6. Speakers include:
  - The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of The City of London Alderman David Lewis
  - Brad Bourland, Chief Economist, *Jadwa Investment Company*
  - Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, *Special Representative on Saudi Arabia to the Prime Minister and Vice President, Middle East Association*
  - Kitty Ussher MP (invited), *UK City Affairs Minister & Economic Secretary to HM Treasury*

### Panel Moderators include:

- Sir Thomas Harris, Vice Chairman Capital Markets, *Standard Chartered Bank*
- Sir David Walker, Senior Adviser, *Morgan Stanley*
- Richard Thomas, Managing Director, *Global Securities House & Chair, UK Advisory Sub-Committee on Islamic Finance*

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- Jason Peers, CEO, *Jasper Capital & Chairman of the MEA - GCC Region*

Panellists include:

- Philip Thorpe, Chairman, *Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority*
- Michael Ainley, *UK Financial Services Authority*
- Anthony Belchambers, *Future and Options Association*
- Robert Ainey, Chief Executive, *Bankers Society of Bahrain*
- Douglas Dowie, *Emirates National Bank of Dubai*
- Stuart Pearce, CEO, *Qatar Financial Centre Authority*
- Albert Momdjian, Managing Director & Head of MENA Investment Banking, *Caylon*
- Bradley Brendon-Cross, CEO, *British Islamic Insurance Holdings*
- Abdulrahman Al Baker, Executive Director, Financial Institutions Supervision, *Central Bank of Bahrain*
- Oliver Agha, Head of Islamic Finance, *DLA Piper*
- Ruth Martin, Managing Director, *Securities & Investment Institute*
- Sandy Shaw, Global Head of Middle East Private Banking, *Coutts plc*
- Andrew Yeandle, Partner, *Strutt & Parker*