# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTERNATIONAL PRESS:

- **Luxembourg's Gulf Tour Strenghtens Economic Ties**
  - tax-news.com, 14/02/11

- **Luxembourg Delegation in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh on Gulf Tour**
  - Islamic Finance Europe, 12/02/11

- **El-Hassan reçoit le prince de Luxembourg**
  - L'Orient - Le Jour, 11/02/11

- **Prince Alwaleed receives Crown Prince Guillaume of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg**
  - Eye of Riyadh, 11/02/11

- **Prince Alwaleed receives Crown Prince Guillaume of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg**
  - AMEinfo, 10/02/11

- **Luxembourg eyes more investment from UAE**
  - gulfnews.com, 08/02/11

- **Crown Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg opens Luxembourg Economic and Financial Forum**
  - WAM (Emirates News Agency), 07/02/11

## LUXEMBOURG PRESS:

- **Finanzplatz auf Werbetour im Mittleren Osten**
  - Luxemburger Wort, 11/02/11

- **Luc Frieden auf Kurzbesuch im Libanon**
  - Luxemburger Wort, 11/02/11

- **Le Grand-Duc héritier et Luc Frieden passent d'Abu Dhabi à l'Arabie saoudite**
  - Lëtzeburger Journal, 09/02/11

- **La formule est éprouvée**
  - La Voix du Luxembourg, 08/02/11

- **Des accords qui restent secrets**
  - La Voix du Luxembourg, 07/02/11

## LFF / GOVERNMENT:

- **Lebanon and Luxembourg: two gateways speaking the same language**
  - lff.lu, 10/02/11

- **Luxembourg and Saudi Arabia**
  - lff.lu, 09/02/11

- **The Middle East in worth a trip for the fund industry**
  - lff.lu, 08/02/11

- **The crown jewel of Luxembourg's service industry**
  - lff.lu, 07/02/11

- **LFF Middle East tour starts in Qatar**
  - lff.lu, 07/02/11

- **Visite du S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier et du ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden aux Emirats arabes unis et en Arabie saoudite**
  - gouvernement.lu, 08/02/11

- **Visite du S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier et du ministre Luc Frieden dans les Pays du Golfe**
  - gouvernement.lu, 05/02/11
Luxembourg's Gulf Tour Strengthens Economic Ties, by Ulrika Lomas, Tax-News.com, Brussels
Last updated 1 hour ago | Monday, February 14, 2011

Luxembourg's Head of State the Grand Duke and Finance Minister Luc Frieden recently undertook a visit of the Gulf region in a bid to promote the country's financial centre. They were accompanied by an important delegation of financial centre representatives.

The aim of the visit to the Middle East was to raise awareness of Luxembourg's financial centre and to strengthen political and economic ties. In each of the areas visited, Luxembourg's Grand Duke Henri and Finance Minister Frieden held talks with political and economic leaders of the respective countries, and spoke during seminars designed to promote the finance centre, organized by "Luxembourg for Finance", the agency responsible for the development of the financial centre.

In Qatar, talks focussed on the political and economic situation in the region. According to the Luxembourg government, Qatar has experienced phenomenal economic growth over the course of the last few years as a result of its gas exports. During the course of the negotiations, the leaders of Qatar and Finance Minister Frieden united on plans for an economic partnership in several key areas.

The finance ministers of both countries also underlined their commitment to strengthening business relations between the financial centres of Doha and Luxembourg. Indeed, various concrete proposals in terms of cooperation were put forward in the interests of the international development of their respective economies.

Building on these discussions, Qatar’s Prime Minister and Finance Minister aim to visit Luxembourg over the course of the coming months to finalize plans.

While on official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), an exchange of views on the economic situation in the region took place and discussions centred on strengthening relations in the area of finance. Alluding to the fact that the country is also currently experiencing impressive economic growth rates, Luxembourg’s government pointed out that the country, which is heavily dependent on the export of fuel, is now seeking to diversify its economy.

During the course of the seminar, Luxembourg’s Finance Minister Frieden outlined in detail the comparative advantages of Luxembourg’s financial centre in a European and international context, while also highlighting the fact that Luxembourg was the first European centre for Islamic finance.

The delegation’s official programme in Saudi Arabia was complemented by a seminar on the Luxembourg financial centre in a bid to identify opportunities for cooperation and to intensify business relations in the area of financial services.

On the last stage of its tour of the Gulf region, the delegation held meetings with leaders in Lebanon, with the talks focussing on political and economic developments in Lebanon and the region. On the sidelines of the meetings, the finance ministers of both countries exchanged views on economic and financial cooperation between Luxembourg and Lebanon.
LUXEMBOURG - Luxembourg Delegation in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh on Gulf Tour

Prince Guillaume, Saudi Finance Minister, Minister Frieden SIP
Prince Guillaume’s and Finance Minister Luz Frieden’s tour of the Gulf States continued when they stopped in Abu Dhabi of the United Arab Emirates on Monday, and then to Saudi Arabia yesterday.

Fresh from their working visit to Qatar, the visit to Abu Dhabi, along with the rest of the Luxembourg delegation from the financial service sector in the Grand Duchy, saw them meeting the UAE’s Finance Minister, Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, to discuss the economic situation in the region and strengthening relationships in the financial field. (source)

Like those of the neighboring emirate of Qatar, the UAE’s rates of economic growth are impressive. Heavily dependent on oil exports, they are now seeking to diversify their economy. The emirate of Abu Dhabi in particular, with its many development projects in tourism, culture, environment and urban planning, becomes an interesting place for foreign investment. Like other countries in the region, Abu Dhabi also plans to build a financial centre.

The assets of the Luxembourg financial market were highlighted during an information seminar organised by Luxembourg for Finance which was opened by Prince Guillaume. Before a large audience composed of representatives of local banking and finance, Luc Frieden detailed the comparative advantages of the Luxembourg financial market in an European context and internationally. The Minister also noted that Luxembourg was the first European centre for Islamic finance.

And then, yesterday, before traveling to Saudi Arabia, Prince Guillaume and Minister Frieden visited Masdar City, the ecological model city project. And then, yesterday, before traveling to Saudi Arabia, Prince Guillaume and Minister Frieden visited Masdar City, the ecological model city project. In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Prince Guillaume and Minister Frieden were received on arrival by the Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ibrahim Bin Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Al-Yassaf, for a political meeting. The itinerary was completed in Riyadh with a workshop on Luxembourg to identify opportunities for co-operation and strengthen business relationships in the financial services field.


Posted by isfineu at 3:40 AM
Labels: abu dhabi, emirates, ksa, luxembourg, mymosaic, riyadh, saudi arabia, uae
0 comments:
Post a Comment

Comment as: Google Account
Post Comment Preview
El-Hassan reçoit le prince de Luxembourg

11/02/2011

La ministre des Finances, Raya el-Hassan, lors de sa rencontre hier avec le prince Guillaume de Luxembourg. Photo Dalati Nohra

Liban - Visite

La ministre des Finances, Raya el-Hassan, a reçu hier le prince Guillaume de Luxembourg à la tête d'une délégation comprenant le ministre des Finances du grand-duché, Luc Frieden, avec laquelle elle s'est entretenue des liens bilatéraux et de la conjoncture économique actuelle au Liban. La ministre a souligné à cet égard la croissance élevée dont a bénéficié le pays du Cèdre au cours des dernières années, rappelant que la croissance réelle avait atteint 8,4 % en 2009, et 7 % l'an dernier.

Lors de cette rencontre, la ministre s'est également penchée sur le déficit budgétaire et la part accordée aux dépenses d'investissements dans le projet de budget 2010, déplorant au passage que ce dernier n'ait pas été voté. « Ceci a contribué à ralentir le développement des projets infrastructurels et l'afflux des investissements étrangers », a-t-elle souligné.

Rappelons que le prince de Luxembourg avait rencontré durant la journée le président de la République, Michel Sleiman, avec lequel il a discuté des moyens de dynamiser les relations bilatérales. Le prince Guillaume a souligné à cette occasion l'intérêt que porte son pays pour le Liban.
HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Alsaud, Chairman of Kingdom Holding Company (KHC) received at his office in Riyadh, HRH Prince Guillaume, Crown Prince of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and an accompanying delegation on Tuesday February 8th 2011. The delegation that accompanied Prince Guillaume included HE Mr. Luc Frieden, Minister of Finance of Luxembourg, Col. Henri Chrisnach, Aide de Camp of HRH, HE Mr. Abdullah Al Mouallimi, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European, HE Mr. Ron Sríkker, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Saudi Arabia and HE Ambassador Alaa El Din Al-Askari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Protocol Affairs.

The meeting was also attended by members from KHC that included Ms. Heba Fatani, Senior Executive Manager, Corporate Communications Department, Dr. Nahla Alanbar, Private Executive Assistant to HRH the Chairman and Mr. Fahad Al Ofi, Executive Assistant to HRH the Chairman.

The meeting began as Prince Alwaleed and Prince Guillaume discussed social and economic issues related to their respective countries. The Duke visit was part of an official trip to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to promote Luxembourg and strengthen economic, and business relations between the two countries. Also on the agenda of discussions between the two Prince’s was KHC's local, regional and international investments.

In May 2010, Prince Alwaleed and HH Princess Ameerah Al-Taweel, Vice Chairwoman of Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation received in Riyadh, Prince Guillaume and an accompanying delegation hosted a dinner in honor of their guest at Kingdom Resort. Furthermore, the Crown Prince awarded Prince Alwaleed, the Commander of the Order of Adolf Nassau, Luxembourg's highest honorary medal awarded to HRH by the Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg.

You can find this page on internet at:
Prince Alwaleed receives Crown Prince Guillaume of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of Kingdom Holding Company (KHC) received at his office in Riyadh, HRH Prince Guillaume, Crown Prince of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and an accompanying delegation on Tuesday February 8th 2011.

The delegation that accompanied Prince Guillaume included HE Mr. Luc Frieden, Minister of Finance of Luxembourg, Col. Henri Chrisnach, Aide de Camp of HRH, HE Mr. Abdullah Al Mouallimi, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European, HE Mr. Ron Srikker, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Saudi Arabia and HE Ambassador Alaa El Din Al-Askari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Protocol Affairs.

The meeting was also attended by members from KHC that included Ms. Heba Fatani, Senior Executive Manager, Corporate Communications Department, Dr. Nahla Alanbar, Private Executive Assistant to HRH the Chairman and Mr. Fahad Al Ofi, Executive Assistant to HRH the Chairman.

The meeting began as Prince Alwaleed and Prince Guillaume discussed social and economic issues related to their respective countries. The Duke visit was part of an official trip to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to promote Luxembourg and strengthen economic, and business relations between the two countries. Also on the agenda of discussions between the two Prince’s was KHC’s local, regional and international investments.

In May 2010, Prince Alwaleed and HH Princess Ameerah Al-Taweel, Vice Chairwoman of Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation received in Riyadh, Prince Guillaume and an accompanying delegation hosted a dinner in honor of their guest at Kingdom Resort. Furthermore, the Crown Prince awarded Prince Alwaleed, the Commander of the Order of Adolf Nassau, Luxembourg’s highest honorary medal awarded to HRH by the Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg.
Luxembourg eyes more investment from UAE

European country has so far attracted 500m euro in various funds

By Himendra Mohan Kumar, Staff Reporter
Published: 00:00 February 8, 2011

Abu Dhabi: Luxembourg has so far attracted around euro 500 million (Dh2.485 billion) from UAE investors in its various investment funds and is eyeing more, Luxembourg's Minister of Finance Luc Frieden said yesterday.

"We don't have a specific target [for investments from the UAE], but, there is a lot going on in our financial services sector. There are about 7,000 investment funds and 150 banks in Luxembourg," Frieden told reporters here.

"We also have a treaty with the UAE to avoid double taxation," he added.

Frieden said Luxembourg plans to open an embassy in Abu Dhabi later this year which would help facilitate
regional investments in Luxembourg. Frieden said they are also eyeing investments in Luxembourg from other countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Lower returns

Frieden said through the investment funds, the invested money goes into the entire European Union.

"The stability of the Eurozone is guaranteed and we have bank confidentiality rules," he added.

Asked about the relatively lower returns on investments in Luxembourg compared to some of the emerging markets, Frieden said lower yields are a reflection of stability.

"Luxembourg is an international financial services centre. It is the world leader in investment funds which are legal products and they channel international investments through Luxembourg into Europe," he added.

According to KPMG, Luxembourg is currently Europe's number one investment fund centre and the second worldwide behind the US. In July 2010, net assets managed by Luxembourg's investment funds were valued at €2.019 billion euros. Additionally, Luxembourg is emerging as a prime location for Islamic finance. There are currently around 16 sukuk listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.
Crown Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg opens Luxembourg Economic and Financial Forum

2011-02-07 19:54:30

--> WAM Abu Dhabi, Feb 07th, 2011 (WAM) -- Crown Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg opened today in Abu Dhabi, the Luxembourg Economic and Financial Forum in the presence of Luc Frieden, Minister of Finance of Luxembourg and Saif Al Shamsi, Executive Director of the Treasury Department in the UAE Central Bank.

More than a hundred heads of financial institutions, banks and businessmen from UAE and Luxembourg participate in the conference being held at the Emirates Palace hotel.

Prince Guillaume said that the objective of convening the forum in Abu Dhabi is to promote and bolster the bilateral relations between the two countries especially in the fields of trade and investment.

Addressing the meeting Al Shamisi said that two countries share similarities of great ambitions and openness to the outside world. This is what makes Luxembourg a success story.

"Especially in the development of the financial centre, which is of particular relevance for us, as we strive to make the UAE the trade, services and financial hub of this region", he said.

Economic openness, free movement of capital and a modern and diversified financial system, constitute the pillars of competitiveness of the UAE economy, Al Shamisi added.

"Indeed, our country is currently ranked by the World Economic Forum as 21 worldwide in financial development, 27 in commitments to the WTO's agreement on trade in services, and 32 in domestic financial sector liberalization", he noted.

Our banking sector is well diversified, comprising 23 local banks, 28 branches of foreign banks, total assets around 1.6 Trillion, lending around 1 Trillion, deposits around 1 Trillion and several other specialized financial institutions like Investment Companies, Finance Companies and Exchange Houses, Al Shamisi said.

When the international crisis struck, the Central Bank's response in coordination with Ministry of Finance was prompt and appropriate. Liquidity Support Facilities were provided to all banks operating in the country. Banks were also given the choice to convert government deposits into Tier 2 capital, which strengthened their capital adequacy ratio to an average of 20.8% as of December 2010, he noted.

The UAE has managed to achieve a sustained development since its establishment in 1971, in tandem with a progressive diversification of the economy out of oil. Our GDP is now over 300 billion dollars. The oil sector is limited to about 30% of the total. Other sectors include construction and real estate (19%), manufacturing industries (16%), trade (9%), transportation and telecom (7%) and the financial sector (6%), noted Al Shamisi.

The country is again in recovery mode after overcoming the setbacks of the international crisis. Economic growth is expected more to be over 3% this year, led by a rebound in tourism and other services that have great potential for more expansion in the future, Al Shamisi stressed.

This economic recovery is taking place in an environment of moderate inflation, which was limited to 1.7% in 2010.

Already 39 companies from Luxembourg have set up branches in Dubai. They belong to a variety of activities like advanced materials optical, logistics, and luxury goods., Let's hope others will follow suit using the UAE as a launching-pad to carry out their business activities and expand in neighboring markets in the GCC area and beyond, taking advantage of our country's strategic location and state-of-the-art infrastructure. This will obviously strengthen our bilateral ties and benefit us all, stressed Al Shamisi.

WAM/AB
Finanzplatz auf Werbetour im Mittleren Osten

Großes Interesse an Seminaren in Abu Dhabi, Riyadh und Beirut / DBA-Verhandlungen mit Saudi-Arabien

Etwa eine Woche rührte der Luxemburger Finanzplatz kräftig die Werbetrommel im Mittleren Osten. Erbgroßherzog Guillaume und Finanzminister Luc Frieden standen an der Spitze einer Delegation, die Abu Dhabi, Riyadh und Beirut besuchte.

60 Teilnehmer hatte das Seminar, das die Finanzplatz-Agentur „LuxembourgforFinance“ (LFF) in Abu Dhabi – der Hauptstadt der Vereinigten Arabischen Emirate – veranstaltete. Es sei ein erster Besuch gewesen, um Spuren zu hinterlassen, erklärte Fernand Grulms, CEO von LFF, gegenüber dem LW.

Für Luxemburg sei es ein schwieriger Markt, weil der Finanzplatz dort noch nicht so bekannt sei. Ähnlich sei die Situation in Riyadh. In der Hauptstadt Saudit-Arabiens informierte Finanzminister Frieden die Vertreter der lokalen Finanzbranche über seine Verhandlungen mit der Regierung über ein Doppelbesteuerungsabkommen. Der Minister äußerte sich zuversichtlich, schon möglichst bald ein Abkommen unterzeichnet zu können.


Eine weitere Parallelle zwischen beiden Ländern sei außerdem ein Bankgeheimnis, das im Libanon wie in Luxemburg vor allem dem Schutz der Privatsphäre diene.

Grulms äußerte sich zuversichtlich, dass sich der Besuch in Beirut noch in diesem Jahr in Form von konkreten Geschäftsaktivitäten auszahlen könnte. „Das ist mein Fazit aus den vielen Gesprächen“, sagte der CEO von LFF. (aho)
Luc Frieden auf Kurzbesuch im Libanon

Mission financière dans la région du Golfe

Le Grand-Duc héritéar et Luc Frieden passent d’Abu Dhabi à l’Arabie saoudite

À Abou Dhabi, deuxième étape de leur voyage de promotion du secteur financier dans la région du Golfe, le Grand-Duc héritéar et le ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden, ont rencontré lundi dernier le ministre des Finances, Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, pour un échange de vues sur la situation économique dans la région et le renforcement des relations dans le domaine financier, comme nous venons de lire dans un communiqué de presse diffusé hier.

Tout comme l’émirat du Qatar avoisinant, les Émirats arabes unis affichent des taux de croissance économique impressionnants. Fortement dépendants de l’exportation de pétrole, ils cherchent aujourd’hui à diversifier leur économie. L’émirat d’Abu Dhabi en particulier, avec ses nombreux projets de développement dans le tourisme, la culture, l’environnement ou l’urbanisme, devient ainsi un endroit privilégié pour les investissements étrangers. À l’instar des autres pays de la région, Abou Dhabi compte se doter également d’un centre financier.

Les atouts de la place financière luxembourgeoise ont été mis en exergue lors d’un séminaire d’information organisé par l’agence «Luxembourg for Finance» et ouvert par le Grand-Duc héritéar. Devant un large public composé des représentants du monde bancaire et financier local, Luc Frieden a exposé en détail les avantages comparatifs de la place financière de Luxembourg dans un contexte européen et international. À cette même occasion, le ministre a rappelé que le Luxembourg était le premier centre européen pour la finance islamique.

Hier matin, avant de se rendre en Arabie saoudite, S.A.R le Grand-Duc héritéar et le ministre des Finances ont visité Masdar City, projet de ville écologique modèle. À Riyad, le Grand-Duc héritéar et le ministre Frieden ont été reçus dès leur arrivée par le ministre des Finances du Royaume d’Arabie saoudite, Ibrahim Bin Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Al-Yassaf, pour une entrevue politique. Le programme à Riyad fut complété par un séminaire sur le Luxembourg afin d’identifier les opportunités de coopération et d’intensifier les relations d’affaires dans le domaine des services financiers.
La formule est éprouvée

La place financière luxembourgeoise a beau peser extrêmement lourd notamment dans l'industrie mondiale des fonds d'investissement et ses acteurs soigner leurs relations avec les financiers du Moyen-Orient, il n'en reste pas moins vrai qu'il faut cent fois remettre son métier sur l'ouvrage. Autrement dit, loin des yeux loin du cœur, raison pour laquelle une mission luxembourgeoise effectue jusque jeudi une tournée dans les pays du Golfe avant de faire escale à Beyrouth sur le chemin du retour.

Poursuite de la mission de promotion de la place financière dans les pays du Golfe

La délégation luxembourgeoise comprend un représentant de la Banque de l'Europe Méridionale (BEMO), établissement libanais spécialisé dans les échanges d'affaires avec les pays arabes, dont le siège européen est basé à Paris mais qui dispose d'une succursale à Luxembourg. Dans ce contexte, l'escale à Beyrouth n'est pas ino
cente.

LB

Le directeur de la Banque centrale des Emirats arabes unis, le prince Guillaume et Luc Frieden, hier lors du séminaire de promotion de la place financière

H.R.H. Prince Guillaume

(Luxembourg)

"Presse nationale" du 08.02.2011
Mission de promotion de la place financière luxembourgeoise au Qatar

Des accords qui restent secrets

Depuis samedi et jusque jeudi, le Grand-Duc héritier, le prince Guillaume, et le ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden, emmènent une mission de promotion de la place financière dans les pays du Golfe. Hier au Qatar, les dirigeants de l'émirat et le Luxembourg ont conclu des partenariats économiqites «dans plusieurs domaines», selon le communiqué du ministère des Finances. La nature de ces accords reste cependant secrète et le représentant du ministère n'a pas souhaité dévoiler des précisions. De même, aucun détail n'a pu être obtenu quant à «l'intensification des relations d'affaires entre les centres financiers de Doha et de Luxembourg» annoncée. Une délégation qatari devrait se déplacer à Luxembourg «dans les prochains mois pour finaliser ces projets». A Abu Dhabi aujourd'hui, ce sont les biotechnologies, secteur sur lequel mise le Grand-Duché, qui seront au centre des rencontres officielles.

Luc Frieden, le prince Guillaume et le Premier ministre du Qatar  (Photo: SIP / Luc Deflorence)
Lebanon and Luxembourg: two gateways speaking the same language

10/02/2011

Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, was the fourth and last stop of the Luxembourg financial sector road show, organised by Luxembourg for Finance and led by the Crown Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg and the Minister of Finance Luc Frieden. Luxembourg and its host have something in common: Luxembourg is considered as a gateway to Europe, Lebanon as Europe’s gateway to the East and Asia’s gateway to the Western world. After the financial seminar, attended by more than 250 people, LFF spoke to three Lebanese experts about the future of their country.

Lebanon is a country of 10,500 square kilometres with a population of 4 million, but also 12 million Lebanese living abroad. Many still dream about coming back to Lebanon one day to retire and to invest in their country of origin. Dr Salim Chahine, Associate Professor at Olayan School of Business in Beirut, speaks about the optimism of his fellow countrymen.

"Despite political and military instability, people remain hopeful about the future of the country and they come back from Africa, Latin America, the US and Europe, but mainly from the Gulf region. Our connections with the Gulf States have allowed us to build a reputation as intermediaries, traders, business men and mainly people from the finance industry."

Dr Makram Sader is the Secretary General of the Association of banks in Lebanon. He explains where this optimism comes from and why political instability is not a big deal for banks. "We really do cope well with political instability and complex situations. Our banks are very liquid, because over the decades they have built up a large part of foreign currencies."

This measure has been taken in order to avoid massive capital outflows in times of crisis and political turmoil. There is another point worth mentioning. "Relationships between clients and their banks are very tight and built on trust. So people are certain about the fact that they can get money at any time they want."

Amine-Elie Bechara is Director of BEMO Europe Banque Privée, based in Luxembourg. He says that Lebanese people always have money on bank accounts abroad, so local banks follow their clients when they go international. "Since we are in Luxembourg, we continue to offer the same quality of service to our customers as in Lebanon. We chose Luxembourg, because like Lebanon, it is a small country with a multilingual perspective."

Another reason brought forward is the professionalism of the actors working in the Luxembourg financial sector. Furthermore, Luxembourg is a member of the European Union and a jurisdiction that
transposes all the EU Directives and is thus in line with international standards.

There is money going out, but there are also important capital flows into the Lebanon. According to Professor Chahine, money comes back to the country when the interest rates in Lebanon are higher than in the US or in Europe. But there is more to it: "Lebanese who want to return to their country usually bring their friends with them, meaning that a lot of Arabs, in particular, also come to invest their money in the Lebanese economy."

Historically speaking, political instability has never deterred Lebanese people from believing in their banking system. As Professor Chahine testifies: "When the government borrows money, it has the choice of financing it via the international markets or the Lebanese markets. Since we are cash rich due to the money coming back from abroad, Lebanese banks have constantly supported their governments."

This results in a situation where the government has always borrowed money from the Lebanese people, whether they live at home or abroad. This has led to a certain degree of stability because no one would want to fail their government and their country.

Despite international pressure on countries with banking secrecy, Lebanese people are very proud of this instrument, which plays a very important role. "Banking secrecy is there to protect citizens’ right against the abuse of power by regional or national government", Dr Makram Sader of the Banking association underlines. "We are trying to balance the relationship between combating money laundering on the one hand and protecting investors’ interests on the other, and we are succeeding in doing this quite well", Professor Chahine adds.

BEMO Europe Banque Privée’s Director Amine-Elie Bechara contends that banking secrecy is certainly not the first reason why Lebanese people transfer money to the Grand Duchy. “The professionalism of the actors plus a stability that people don’t find in their own countries are the keys.”

He concludes that banking secrecy is in any case less an issue to Lebanese abroad than to European clients in Luxembourg, because there is no tax being paid on their money invested abroad.

After Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Saudi-Arabia, Lebanon was thus the last stop of the Luxembourg financial sector road show, organised by Luxembourg for Finance and led by the Crown Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg and the Minister of Finance Luc Frieden. CW
Luxembourg and Saudi Arabia
09/02/2011

Luxembourg and Saudi Arabia

HRH Crown Prince Guillaume

*Riyadh, the Capital of Saudi Arabia, is the third stop of the Luxembourg financial sector road show. Speaking in front of 120 financial experts, Minister of Finance Luc Frieden said that Luxembourg had much to share with the Gulf Region. He also announced that the signing of a Double Tax Treaty between Saudi Arabia and Luxembourg is foreseen this summer. Crown prince Guillaume, in his speech, said that Luxembourg is often considered as a microcosm of Europe.*

Luxembourg has half a million inhabitants, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia more than 25 million, but the countries have something in common: a large foreign population. Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg underlined that his country is considered as a melting pot because of its 150 nationalities.

He went on to provide a historical flashback starting at the end of World War Two, when Luxembourg became a member of all the important international institutions including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. “They positioned Luxembourg at the forefront of European integration. Luxembourg is one of the six founding members of the European Union”, he added.

Thanks to its strategic location between the cultures of France and Germany, many internationally active companies have established their headquarters in Luxembourg. The crown prince cited SES Global, the world’s largest satellite operator and various internet sales providers such as Amazon, Skype and Ebay.

Despite the importance of the service sector, Luxembourg also maintains a diversified, strong and globally competitive industrial base which includes the automotive supply industry with Delphi, Goodyear and Guardian, and the chemical industry, with Dupont. Luxembourg is the domicile of the world’s largest steel producer, Arcelor Mittal and of one of the top ten cargo carriers in the world, Cargolux.

He concluded by saying that the financial centre was without any doubt the crown jewel of the Luxembourg service sector.

Minister of Finance Luc Frieden explained what he considered to be the principal asset of the financial centre: it is the only one in the euro zone which is truly international. “A lot of financial institutions that come to Luxembourg use Luxembourg as their gateway to the European market of 500 million people”.

“Today we are the number one for wealth management in the euro zone. We are also the number one for investment funds in Europe and second in the world behind the United States”.

http://www.lff.lu/finance/news/news-detail/article/luxembourg...
He doesn’t beat about the bush when it comes to political priorities: “The government wants the financial sector to be the key pillar of our economy; therefore, a lot of attention is given to the further development of this sector”.

He adds that the financial centre is often referred to as the Switzerland of the European Union. “We have indeed a lot of common features with the financial services sector in Switzerland, but we are in the European Union and that is why a lot of international banks, including the Swiss banks, use Luxembourg as a hub to enter the European Market.”

On Thursday, the fourth and last stop of the Luxembourg financial sector road show will be Beirut, the capital of Lebanon. Luxembourg and its host have something in common: Luxembourg is considered as a gateway to Europe, the Lebanon as Europe’s gateway to the East and Asia’s gateway to the Western world. CW

Photo: © 2011 SIP, all rights reserved
The Middle East is worth a trip for the fund industry

08/02/2011

The Middle East is worth a trip for the fund industry

Claude Kremer, Alfi Chairman

The Gulf Region is important to the Luxembourg fund industry and this is reflected in the frequent visits by ALFI representatives. The Luxembourg investment fund association takes the region so seriously that it set up its first non-Luxembourg based working group in Dubai. In an LFF interview, ALFI chairman Claude Kremer speaks about business in the Gulf Region and about challenges for the fund industry.

How has the fund industry recovered from the financial crisis?

The European fund industry has clearly shown its resilience. During the crisis assets under management fell by 25%, but now we are back to all time highs. Obviously this has a lot to do with stock market recovery but it is also due to a steady inflow of “fresh” money and here Luxembourg played an important role.

In what sense?

During 2010, around 200 billion euros of new assets were invested in funds. A considerable amount of 150 billion euros were invested in Luxembourg domiciled funds.

Why is the Gulf region so important for the Luxembourg fund industry?

Luxembourg domiciled funds are starting to profit from global recognition of the UCITS brand. UCITS first developed as a European brand, with the idea of a passport facilitating distribution across the EU. We recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of UCITS, which in the meantime has become a global brand. A lot of UCITS funds are distributed outside Europe. Today, Luxembourg is a world leader in cross-border fund distribution. According to Lipper FMI, 76% of all funds that are sold in at least three countries are domiciled in Luxembourg. Some of these funds are sold in more than 50 countries worldwide: in Europe, of course, in Asia, Latin America and increasingly here in the Middle East.

How does a Luxembourg fund reach a client in the Middle East?

First of all the asset manager has to choose a domicile. In Europe, he is most likely to choose
Luxembourg or Ireland. Once the domicile chosen, the product has to be set up and sold via a distribution network. This depends on how the fund promoter is organised. In this context, the UCITS brand is a big help. If you tell an investor that his savings plan is a UCITS product, increasingly, this is recognised as meaning that the investment is sound and well diversified, and above all that it is well regulated, providing comfort that his money is safely invested.

**What about competition with offshore funds? Is a Luxembourg domiciled fund less competitive because more expensive?**

You shouldn’t compare apples and oranges. In Europe we believe in the concept of well regulated funds and this will not change in the future. We have noticed that during the crisis many investors lost confidence and that is why they turned to more regulated products. A lot of offshore products have been re-domiciled onshore and many recently created products were directly set up as regulated funds. Luxembourg has a key part to play here, both in the UCITS and in the non UCITS markets, that is, in the domain of alternative investment funds where Luxembourg is well positioned because of its special investment funds (SIFs).

**This means that Luxembourg should use the UCITS experience as a source of inspiration and replicate it for the alternative asset classes?**

UCITS has shown us that Luxembourg has the capacity to help shape a brand in the interests of investors. Luxembourg intends to have the same approach when it comes to the Alternative Investment Funds Directive (AIFMD). I must add that we anticipated the Directive with our legislation on Specialised Investment Funds in 2007. This law created a product that is exactly in line with what the AIFM is trying to achieve, a long time before AIFM was in the news.

**How hard is it as a market leader to keep being innovative and creative?**

The Luxembourg fund community, represented by ALFI, is a very dynamic bunch of people. If we are on a road show abroad, we speak with one voice, which I think is fantastic. Although we are competitors on a day-to-day basis, we are unique when it comes to showing solidarity in spreading one and the same message. This gives us strength and makes us convincing. It creates both admirations on an international level. ALFI coordinates numerous working groups covering all key topics of the fund business. These groups are a major source of innovation: our members put a lot of efforts and commitment in them with one shared goal: the development of Luxembourg as a center of excellence for the fund industry.

*Interview by Christian Welter*
“Credibility, transparency, responsibility and personal commitment are the trade marks of the Luxembourg business community”. These were the words of Crown Prince Guillaume during his opening speech in front of 150 experts at a financial seminar in Abu Dhabi organised by Luxembourg for Finance. Both the Crown Prince and Minister of Finance Luc Frieden underlined the excellent relations between the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg. In this context, Minister Frieden spoke about sending a strong signal to the Gulf Region.

The Luxembourg government decided to open its first and, so far, only embassy in the Gulf Region in Abu Dhabi, which is one of seven emirates of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Minister of Finance Luc Frieden is convinced that this will further develop the political and economic relations between the Grand Duchy and the countries from the Middle East. “We have a lot to share with the countries of the Gulf Region. The world is global and nobody will survive if he is only looking at his national interests.”

The Middle East is an extremely important region for the Luxembourg financial community. The UAE for instance is an ideal region for investments due to its strategic and accessible location for major regional markets, its reliable infrastructure and the minimal financial risk for investors.

“It is nice to be back in Abu Dhabi”, Luc Frieden states. “Since our last visit here a lot has changed in the world, and also a lot in the European Union. The last two years have been difficult, challenging times for investors and for finance ministers.” The consequence of the banking and financial crisis is more transparency, supervision and stronger regulation for banks.

Mr Frieden believes that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Determined action by governments managed to avert a collapse of the European economy and enabled it to get out of a difficult situation. The internationally oriented economies in the euro zone, like Luxembourg and Germany, are doing quite well after a difficult year in 2009.

Having a stable currency and sound finances are two sides of the same coin. “This is what we try to apply in Luxembourg. Unlike the other countries of the European Union, we have always advocated sound public finances. We realised that those international actors and investors who come to Luxembourg are seeking a stable political, economic and social climate”.

Sound public finances allow the government to have a predictable tax policy which is the key element when it comes to developing the industrial and financial sectors.

Today there are some 150 banks in Luxembourg and all the big names globally are represented. Luc
Frieden illustrates the current situation with an example. “A month ago, the largest bank of the world in terms of market capitalisation, the Chinese ICBC, established its European headquarters in Luxembourg. This shows the trust international actors put in Luxembourg”.

The Gulf Region is also extremely important for the fund industry. Claude Kremer, chairman of the Luxembourg investment fund association ALFI, stresses that his organisation goes there very often. In 2009 it was even decided to launch ALFI’s first working group outside Luxembourg with actors from the fund industry based in the region. Claude Kremer is very satisfied with the outcome, after two years. “It is a precious help for ALFI to get direct feedback from those who know the region best. It soon appeared that many Luxembourg based players had a local presence in the Middle East”.

Saudi-Arabia will be the next stop of the Luxembourg financial mission. The Kingdom of Saudi-Arabia, possessing 20% of the world’s proven petroleum reserves, has an oil-based economy and a stable banking industry. CW

Photo: (f.l.t.r.) Saif Al Shamsi, Director of the UAE General Bank; HRH Hereditary Grand Duke Guillaume; HE Luc Frieden, Minister of Finance
LFF Middle East tour starts in Qatar
07/02/2011

Prior to this week’s financial mission to the Middle East, organised by Luxembourg for Finance, HRH Crown Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg and HE Luc Frieden, Minister of Finance, visited the emirate Qatar on Sunday, 6 February. This visit was the opening act of a week long road show to Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and Beirut. At each stop, a delegation of financial sector professionals from Luxembourg will present business opportunities in the Luxembourg financial centre.

The Luxembourg delegation to Qatar was welcomed by the Emir, HRH Cheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, as well as his prime Minister, Cheikh Hamad bin Jassim Altani, and his Minister of Finance, Yousef Hussein Kamal. At this meeting they discussed current political events in the Gulf region, as well its economic development. In this context, a partnership was signed with the aim of further developing economic relations between Luxembourg and Qatar. Minister Frieden emphasised the favorable economic conditions of the Grand Duchy. The two sides agreed to deepen relations between the two financial centres. In the coming months, a Qatari delegation will visit Luxembourg to complete discussions concerning these projects of collaboration. EK

Photo: (f.l.t.r.) HE Luc Frieden, Minister of Finance; HRH Hereditary Grand Duke Guillaume; Yousef Hussein Kamal, Minister of Finance and Economy of Qatar
Informations et Actualités du gouvernement luxembourgeois

URL:http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle_presse/communiques/2011/02-fevrier/08-frieden-arabie/

Retour vers la page d'origine

Communiqué
Visite de S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier et du ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden aux Émirats arabes unis et en Arabie saoudite
08-02-2011

À Abou Dhabi, deuxième étape de leur voyage de promotion du secteur financier dans la région du Golfe, S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden, ont rencontré le lundi 7 février 2011 le ministre des Finances, Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, pour un échange de vues sur la situation économique dans la région et le renforcement des relations dans le domaine financier.

Tout comme l’émirat du Qatar avoisinant, les Émirats arabes unis affichent des taux de croissance économique impressionnants. Fortement dépendants de l’exportation de pétrole, ils cherchent aujourd’hui à diversifier leur économie. L’émirat d’Abou Dhabi en particulier, avec ses nombreux projets de développement dans le tourisme, la culture, l’environnement ou l’urbanisme, devient ainsi un endroit privilégié pour les investissements étrangers. À l’instar des autres pays de la région, Abou Dhabi compte se doter également d’un centre financier.

Les atouts de la place financière luxembourgeoise ont été mis en exergue lors d’un séminaire d’information organisé par l’agence Luxembourg for Finance et ouvert par S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier. Devant un large public composé des représentants du monde bancaire et financier local, Luc Frieden a exposé en détail les avantages comparatifs de la place financière de Luxembourg dans un contexte européen et international. À cette même occasion, le ministre a rappelé que le Luxembourg était le premier centre européen pour la finance islamique.

Le 8 février 2011, avant de se rendre en Arabie saoudite, S.A.R le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre des Finances ont visité Masdar City, projet de ville écologique modèle.

À Riyad, le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre Frieden ont été reçus dès leur arrivée par le ministre des Finances du Royaume d’Arabie saoudite, Ibrahim Bin Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Al-Yassaf, pour une entrevue politique. Le programme à Riyad fut complété par un séminaire sur le Luxembourg afin d’identifier les opportunités de coopération et d’intensifier les relations d’affaires dans le domaine des services financiers.

Communiqué par le ministère des Finances

Dernière mise à jour de cette page le 08-02-2011
Copyright Service Information et Presse

Retour vers la page d'origine
Article d’actualité

Visite de S.A.R. le Grand-Duc hérîtier et du ministre Luc Frieden dans les pays du Golfe
05-02-2011 - 10-02-2011

Du 5 au 10 février 2011, S.A.R. le Grand-Duc hérîtier a présidé une délégation dirigée par le ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden, dans la région du Golfe dans le cadre d’une mission de promotion de la place financière. Ils ont été accompagnés d’une importante délégation de représentants de la place financière.

La mission a eu pour objet de mieux faire connaître la place financière dans la région et de renforcer les relations politiques et économiques avec cette partie du monde. Dans chacun des pays visités, le Grand-Duc hérîtier et le ministre Luc Frieden ont rencontré pour des entretiens des dirigeants politiques et économiques.

Le Grand-Duc hérîtier et le ministre des Finances sont intervenus par ailleurs au cours de séminaires consacrés à la place financière de Luxembourg. Ces séminaires sur la place financière ont été organisés par "Luxembourg for Finance", l’agence de développement pour la place financière.

Qatar


Le Qatar, qui connaît une croissance économique phénoménale depuis des années grâce à ses exportations de gaz, représente la première étape d’une mission de promotion de la place financière dans la région du Golfe.

Dans ce contexte, Luc Frieden a rappelé que l’économie luxembourgeoise est connue pour être favorable aux investissements étrangers.

Les dirigeants du Qatar et le ministre des Finances luxembourgeois ont convenu d’un partenariat
À Riyad, le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre Frieden ont été reçus par le ministre des Finances du Royaume d'Arabie saoudite, Ibrahim Bin Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Al-Yassaf, pour une entrevue politique.

Le programme à Riyad a été complété par un séminaire sur le Luxembourg afin d'identifier les opportunités de coopération et d'intensifier les relations d'affaires dans le domaine des services financiers.

Liban

La dernière étape de leur tournée dans la région du Moyen-Orient a amené S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden, au Liban où ils ont été reçus par le président de la République, Michel Sleiman.

L'entrevue a porté sur les développements politiques et économiques au Liban et dans la région.

En marge de cet entretien, Luc Frieden a également pu rencontrer la ministre des Finances, Raya El Hassan, pour un échange de vues sur la coopération économique et financière entre le Luxembourg et le Liban.

Pour en savoir plus ...

Liens externes
- Ministère des Finances
Économique dans plusieurs domaines. Les deux ministres des Finances se sont également exprimés en faveur d’une intensification des relations d’affaires entre les centres financiers de Doha et de Luxembourg. Quelques pistes concrètes de coopération ont été évoquées dans l’intérêt du développement international de leurs économies respectives. Une visite à Luxembourg du Premier ministre et du ministre des Finances du Qatar pour poursuivre ces entretiens aura lieu dans les prochains mois pour finaliser ces projets.

Émirats arabes unis

À Abou Dhabi, deuxième étape de leur voyage de promotion du secteur financier dans la région du Golfe, S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre des Finances, Luc Frieden, ont rencontré le 7 février le ministre des Finances, Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, pour un échange de vues sur la situation économique dans la région et le renforcement des relations dans le domaine financier.

Tout comme l’émirat du Qatar avoisinant, les Émirats arabes unis affichent des taux de croissance économique impressionnants. Fortement dépendants de l’exportation de pétrole, ils cherchent aujourd’hui à diversifier leur économie. L’émirat d’Abou Dhabi en particulier, avec ses nombreux projets de développement dans le tourisme, la culture, l’environnement ou l’urbanisme, devient ainsi un endroit privilégié pour les investissements étrangers. À l’instar des autres pays de la région, Abou Dhabi compte se doter également d’un centre financier.

Les atouts de la place financière luxembourgeoise ont été mis en exergue lors d’un séminaire d’information organisé par l’agence "Luxembourg for Finance" et ouvert par S.A.R. le Grand-Duc héritier. Devant un large public composé des représentants du monde bancaire et financier local, Luc Frieden a exposé en détail les avantages comparatifs de la place financière de Luxembourg dans un contexte européen et international. À cette même occasion, le ministre a rappelé que le Luxembourg était le premier centre européen pour la finance islamique.

Le 8 février, avant de se rendre en Arabie saoudite, S.A.R le Grand-Duc héritier et le ministre des Finances ont visité Masdar City, projet de ville écologique modèle.

Arabie saoudite