13th Annual Business Matchmaking Conference (BMC) 2018
BMC Conference Agenda
Hosted by the: Afghan-American Chamber of Commerce (AACC)
April 24-26, 2018

TUESDAY (EVENING), April 24, 2018, 6:00PM-8:00PM, Location: The Trump Washington Hotel, Franklin Study Ballroom.

- Welcome Reception for Visiting Afghan Business & Government Delegations
  - Welcome: AACC Chairman Sulaiman Lutfi and CEO Jeffrey Grieco
  - Introduction and Brief Remarks by Afghanistan Business Association Representatives

WEDNESDAY, April 25, 2018 (8:00am-9:00pm)


Morning Theme: Priority Export Promotion Sectors for Afghanistan

- 8:00am-9:15am: Registration, Breakfast, Networking and Exhibition Hall Opening:
- 9:00am: Welcome and Recognition of Honored Guests, Partners & Sponsors:
  - AACC Chairman Sulaiman Lutfi provides welcome and introduction of honored guests, business associations, sponsors and associated organizations
- 9:15am: BMC 2018 Opening scene setter:
  - AACC President & CEO, Jeffrey Grieco provides opening BMC 2018 scene setter
  - Introduction of GIRoA VIP video intervention.
- 9:30am: Opening Keynote Afghanistan Government Leader VIP Address:
  - His Excellency, The Honorable Ashraf Ghani, President, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) - Video Intervention.
- 9:40am: Welcome to BMC 2018 Attendees:
  - His Excellency Hamdullah Mohib, Afghanistan Ambassador to the United States. (15 minute address)
- 10:00am: U.S. Government Keynote Speaker: Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Wilbur Ross (Invited) or Under-Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Administration, Mr. Gilbert Kaplan. (Invited)
- 10:15am: Afghanistan (GIRoA) Economic Update:
  - His Excellency, Dr. Mustafa Mastoor, Minister, Afghanistan Ministry of Economy. Topic: Afghanistan’s Improved Trade and Investment Environment –Welcoming U.S. Partnerships. (12 minute address with moderated Q&A)
- 10:30am: Afghanistan Private Sector Update:
  - Mr. Atiqullah Nusrat, CEO, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI). Topic: Afghanistan business perspectives on private sector economy. (12 minute address with moderated Q&A)
- 10:45am: Plenary #1 - Expert Panel Discussion: Export Processing Zones, Regional Trade and Export Promotion Opportunities
  - Panel Moderator: Sulaiman Lutfi, AACC Chairman
  - Panel Opening Keynote: The Honorable Mahmood Shah Habib, Director General, Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority. Topic: Afghanistan’s Vision for Future Civil Aviation and the Exports Economy including Air Exports, EPZs, Airport Development, etc. (15 minutes)
    - Note: Potential signing ceremony between ACAA and USG establishing a new program to support rapid development of export processing zones throughout Afghanistan.
Respondent Panelist #1: Mr. Stephen Irwin, Aviation & Export Processing Zone Expert. Topic: How USG and GIRoA could best assist in finalizing Afghanistan’s EPZs, airport concessions and related joint ventures. (5 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #2: Mr. Cesar Valero, Senior Partner, ALG-Indra Corporation, Barcelona Spain. Topic: Successful models of EPZs globally, how the Afghanistan “Regional Air Export Hub” will look and how businesses can participate. (10 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #3: Mr. Abdul Safir Sahar, Director, Chemonics International. Topic: Export Opportunities in Agriculture. (5 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #4: Mr. Keith Alaniz, Co-Founder, Rumi Spice, Topic: Best Practices of a Successful Agricultural Exporter from Afghanistan. (5 minutes)

Moderated Q&A (10 minutes)

11:35am: Coffee Break


Panel Moderator: Mr. Joseph Yang, Director, CLDP Program, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Panel Opening Keynote/Scenesetter: Mr. Mir Ahmed Javid Sadat, Deputy Minister for Policy and Programs, Ministry of Mines and Petroleum. Topic: Major reforms within Afghanistan’s mining sector, new policies to promote private investment and summary of new investment opportunities. (12 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #1: Mr. Jack Medlin, U.S Geological Survey (USGS). Topic: Overview of Afghanistan’s extractive resources sector and new U.S. Government partnership to assist in more rapid commercial development. (10 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #2: Mr. Naqibullah Hotak, Core Drillers, Inc: Kabul, Afghanistan. Topic: Successful talc mining in Afghanistan and private sector view of new mining opportunities. (8 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #3: The Honorable Michael Stanley, Sector Lead, Oil, Gas, Mining. The World Bank Group. Topic: World Bank strategy and/or recommendations to increase investment in Afghanistan’s extractives sector. (10 minutes)

Moderated Q&A (10 minutes)

12:40pm: Luncheon Keynote Address:

Luncheon Keynote: H.E. Minister Advisor to President Ashraf Ghani, Mr. Hamid Farooqi. Also, currently serving as Chancellor, Kabul University and Professor of Economics and former GIRoA Minister of Transportation and Civil Aviation. (10-12 minute address)

Afternoon Theme: Improving the Private Sector Enabling Environment for Private Sector Growth

1:45pm: Plenary #3 – Expert Panel Discussion: Reducing Barriers to Afghanistan Women-Owned Businesses

Panel Moderator: Ms. Kat Conlon, Executive Director, Friends of the American University of Afghanistan. Topic: Educating Future Women Business Leaders of Afghanistan (15 minutes)


Respondent Panelist #1: Ms. Lael Mohib, Communications Adviser to the Deputy Minister of Finance for Policy. Topic: The Economic Empowerment of Afghanistan’s Women. (15 minutes)

Moderated Q&A (15 minutes)

2:45pm: Coffee Break

3:00pm: Afternoon Afghanistan Industry Leader VIP Keynote Address:
Private Sector VIP Industry Keynote Address: Dr. Ehsan Bayat, Bayat Group Chairman. Topic: Perspectives on How Private Investment Can Happen in Afghanistan Now. (20 minutes)

Moderated Q&A to follow his remarks. (10 minutes)

3:30pm: Plenary #4 – Expert Panel Discussion: Afghanistan’s ICT Sector & New Market Investment Opportunities

Panel Moderator: Mr. Oliver Dziggel, Co-Chairman, AACC ICT Working Group. (5 minutes)

Panel Opening Keynote/scene setter: The Honorable Dr. Mohamed N. Azizi, Board Chairman, Afghanistan Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (ATRA) Topic: Overview of Afghanistan’s ICT Market Liberalization, Business Opportunities for Investors and Regulatory Updates (15 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #1: Mr. Joel Allen, President, Talia Afghanistan Corp. Topic: New technology/investment initiatives involving Afghanistan ICT. (5 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #2: Mr. Monty Simus, Afghan Wireless (AWCC). Topic: AWCC new business strategies with 4G market liberalization and more. (10 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #3: Mr. Ken Chen, COO/CTO, ARX Communications/Asia Consultancy GroupRepresentative (ACG). Topic: Challenges and Opportunities for Afghanistan ICT market development. (5 minutes)

Moderated Q&A. (20 minutes)

4:30pm: “One-On-One” Networking Sessions with BMC Speakers, Panelists and Experts

5:30pm: Plenary Closes

7:00pm-9:00pm: AACC Reception and Complementary BMC 2018 Industry Award Dinner:

Complementary for all BMC 2018 attendees.

Location: J.W. Marriott Hotel, 14th Street and Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. (just across from the Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center).

Presenting AACC Industry Leadership Award to Dr. Ehsan Bayat, Chairman, The Bayat Group.

Presenting AACC Matchmaker Award to Haji Obaidullah Sader Khail, Chairman, Afghan Business Council of Dubai

THURSDAY, April 26, 2018 (8:00am-6:00pm)

Morning Theme: Helping Increase Afghanistan’s Trade and Foreign Direct/Afghan Private Investment

8:00am-9:15am: Registration, Breakfast, Networking and Exhibition Hall Opening:

9:30am: Morning Multilateral/World Bank VIP Keynote address


10:00am: Plenary #5 – Expert Panel Discussion: Energy, Power and Infrastructure Investments

Panel Moderator: The Honorable Don Ritter, AACC President & CEO Emeritus. Topic: Narrowing the focus to Afghan extractives for energy - IPP investment projects. (5 minutes)

Panel Opening Keynote/Scenesetter: Mr. Monty Simus, Bayat Group and Bayat Energy. Topic: Bayat Energy Group views on increasing development of Afghanistan’s energy sector through private investment and Independent Power Production (IPP). (10 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #1: Mr. Wakil Nasery, Chief Operating Officer, DABS, Topic: Investment Opportunities in the Afghanistan Energy Sector. (10 minutes)
Respondent Panelist #2: Dr. Fei Yu, Deputy Representative, North American Representative Office, Asian Development Bank. Topic: ADB plans to enable private sector development and investments in Afghanistan. (10 minutes)

Moderated Q&A (15 minutes)

11:00am-11:15AM: Coffee Break

11:15am: Mid-Morning Investment Leader VIP Keynote address: TBD

11:35am: Plenary #6-Expert Panel Discussion: New Investment Opportunities in Targeted Sectors

Panel Moderator: Mr. Assad Mattin, Founder and CEO, Oxus Consulting and Afghan-American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) Executive Committee Member. (5 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #1: Energy Industry Development: Mr. Christopher Clement, Director, International Affairs, Siemens Corporation (U.S.). Topic: Siemens’ Vision for Energy Development in Central Asia including Afghanistan. (7 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #2: Energy and Infrastructure: Mr. Abe Goldschmidt, Afghanistan Country Director, U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) (Invited) Topic: OPIC support available for new Investment opportunities. (7 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #3: Mr. Kristopher Haag, Managing Director, EMI Advisors. Topic: How to access finance for investments in Afghanistan. (7 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #4: Extractives-Precious Stone: Presented video on new investment in Afghanistan’s precious stone industry by MACEC Construction and Natural Stone Processing Company via CEO Asif Stanekzai. (7 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #5: ICT: Mr. Besmellah Khuram, ATRA Board Member. Topic: AFTEL and Other ICT as U.S. telecom investment opportunity. (Invited) (7 minutes)

Moderated Q&A (7 minutes)

12:35pm: Luncheon and VIP Address TBD:

Afternoon Theme: Improving Regional and U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Economic Relations


2:15pm: Plenary Panel #7- Expert Panel Discussion: Afghan-Centered Regional Economic Integration

Panel Moderator: Dr. Robert J. Voetsch, Senior Advisor, Afghan-American Chamber of Commerce (AACC). (5 minutes)

Panel Opening Keynote/Scenesetter: The Honorable Mr. Hassan Soroosh, Director-General for Economic Cooperation Dept., Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Topic: RECCA’s New Approach to Private Sector Development (15 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #1: Mr. Atiqullah Nusrat, CEO, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI). Topic: Enhancing Regional B2B Partnerships (10 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #2: The Honorable Mr. Naseer Faq, Deputy Director-General for International Economic Cooperation, Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Topic: Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Update and the CBMs. (10 minutes)

Respondent Panelist #3: Dr. Jeffrey Stacey, Geopolicity Inc. (10 minutes)

Moderated Q&A. (20 minutes)

3:15pm: Coffee Break
3:30pm: Plenary Panel #8 – Expert Panel Discussion: Forging a New U.S. – Afghanistan Investment Marketplace:
  - **Panel Moderator:** Mr. Daniel Tikvar, Deputy Director-Afghanistan, U.S. Department of State. Topic: Brief Update on President’s South Asia Strategy and Upcoming Geneva Donor Meeting. (5 minutes)
  - **Panel Opening Keynote/Scene setter:** Mr. Enayat Qasimi, Of Counsel, Afghan-American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) and Partner, Whiteford, Taylor and Preston Law Firm. Topic: Doing Business in Afghanistan-Compliance and Other Commercial/Governmental Considerations. (15 minutes)
  - **Respondent Panelist #1:** Mr. Naeem Hasanyar, President and CEO, Emerging Consulting Group. Topic: How to Navigate the Afghanistan Tax and Reporting Environment as an Investor. (5 minutes)
  - **Moderated Q&A.** (10 minutes)

4:15pm: Plenary Panel #9: Afghanistan Security and Investment Project Security
  - **Panel Moderator:** Mr. Doug Brooks, Executive Committee Member, Afghan-American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) (5 minutes)
  - **Respondent Panelist #1:** Mr. Mark DeWitt, General Counsel, Garda World. Topic: Status of Afghanistan’s Private Security Sector and Recommendations Looking Forward on Protecting New Major Investments. (7 minutes)
  - **Respondent Panelist #3:** Mr. Howie Lind, President, Int’l Stability Operations Association (ISOA). Topic: A New Role for Private Security Providers in Afghanistan -Securing Investments and Infrastructure. (7 minutes)
  - **Moderated Q&A** (10 minutes)

5:00pm: Closing AACC Address: Mr. Sulaiman Lutfi and Mr. Jeffrey Grieco

5:15pm: One-On-One” Networking Sessions with Speakers, Panelists and Attendee Experts

6:00pm: Conference closes.