



# ICDT INSIGHTS

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

### PAKISTAN STRENGTHENS ITS POSITION AS A GLOBAL AEROSPACE EXPORTER THROUGH EXPANDING SOUTH-SOUTH PARTNERSHIPS

*Growing interest in Pakistan's JF-17 fighter jet reflects a broader transformation in global defense markets, where emerging economies are strengthening technological cooperation and expanding access to advanced capabilities.*



Recent discussions between Morocco and Pakistan regarding the potential acquisition of JF-17 fighter jets highlight a deepening trend of South-South cooperation in high-value strategic industries. Beyond a conventional procurement process, these

exchanges illustrate how emerging economies are increasingly engaging in technology partnerships that combine industrial development, training, and knowledge transfer.

The JF-17, developed through

collaboration between Pakistan and China, has gained international attention as a versatile and cost-effective multi-role aircraft. Its growing visibility in global markets reflects the ability of emerging countries to design and produce competitive

aerospace solutions, tailored to the operational and financial realities of mid-tier economies. For countries exploring modernization pathways, such platforms provide access to advanced capabilities while maintaining flexibility in procurement and long-term maintenance.

This evolution is supported by a broader shift in the global aerospace ecosystem. Historically, access to advanced airpower technologies was concentrated among a limited number of suppliers, often linked to specific geopolitical alignments. Today, new industrial hubs—such as Pakistan’s National Aerospace Science and Technology Park—are contributing to the development of local expertise, fostering innovation, and supporting the emergence of integrated defense ecosystems.

For Morocco, ongoing discussions with Pakistan are

part of a wider strategy to diversify partnerships and reinforce technical cooperation across multiple domains, including training, cybersecurity, and industrial development. The recently signed memorandum of understanding between the two countries reflects a comprehensive approach that goes beyond equipment acquisition, emphasizing capacity building and long-term collaboration.

At the same time, Pakistan’s positioning as an exporter of aerospace solutions underscores the increasing role of emerging economies in shaping global value chains. With export agreements reaching significant volumes and growing interest from Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, the country is contributing to a more diversified and accessible defense market.

This dynamic opens new

perspectives for countries within the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), where shared priorities around industrialization, skills development, and technological sovereignty can be leveraged through strategic partnerships. By combining affordability, adaptability, and collaborative frameworks, such initiatives support the development of resilient ecosystems capable of sustaining long-term growth.

Ultimately, the expansion of aerospace cooperation among emerging economies signals a structural transformation—one where innovation, partnership, and mutual development are redefining access to advanced technologies and strengthening economic ties across the Global South.

Source: [Responsible Statecraft](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Yabiladi](#).

## AZERBAIJAN AND KYRGYZSTAN DEEPEN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION THROUGH INVESTMENT, TRADE AND CONNECTIVITY

*Accelerating trade growth, rising investment flows and expanding sectoral cooperation are positioning Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan as emerging partners in shaping new economic corridors across Central Asia and the Caspian region.*

The strengthening economic relationship between Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan reflects a rapidly evolving partnership driven by measurable trade expansion, rising investment flows, and coordinated development strategies. Recent high-level engagements, including the sixth Joint Intergovernmental Commission held in Baku, have confirmed both countries’ commitment to translating political alignment into



concrete economic outcomes.

Trade dynamics illustrate this acceleration. Bilateral trade

increased by more than 94% during the first ten months of 2025 compared to the previous year, signaling strong momentum in commercial exchanges. This growth is supported by targeted initiatives aimed at diversifying trade flows and strengthening business-to-business linkages, including the creation of a trade-logistics center in Kyrgyzstan and the opening of a Kyrgyz Trade House in Baku to facilitate market access for Kyrgyz products.

Investment flows are also expanding at a notable pace. In the first half of 2025, foreign direct investment from Kyrgyzstan into Azerbaijan reached \$7.706 million—an increase of 78 times compared to the same period in 2024, when it stood at \$99,000. While still representing 0.2% of total FDI inflows into Azerbaijan, which exceeded \$3.222 billion during the same period, this surge reflects a clear upward trajectory and growing investor confidence between the two economies.

Institutional mechanisms are reinforcing this trend. The Azerbaijan-Kyrgyz Development Fund has been scaled up significantly, with its capital increased fourfold from \$25 million to \$100 million. The Fund has already attracted more than 40 project applications, spanning sectors such as tourism, infrastructure, and industry. A flagship example is the construction of a five-star hotel on the shores of Issyk-Kul, illustrating how investment is translating into tangible assets and economic activity.

Sectoral cooperation is expanding across multiple high-value domains. Agriculture remains a priority, with joint initiatives covering seed production, aquaculture, veterinary services, and agro-insurance. In parallel, energy cooperation—particularly in renewable energy—aligns with broader regional ambitions, including participation in a Central Asia–Azerbaijan green energy corridor.

Transport and logistics are equally central to the partnership. Both countries are advancing efforts to optimize the Middle Corridor through digitalization, customs simplification, and better coordination of tariff policies. The integration of infrastructure such as the China–Kyrgyzstan–Uzbekistan railway and the use of Baku’s port facilities enhances connectivity between Central Asia, the Caspian region, and European markets.

Taken together, these figures and initiatives point to a structured and rapidly intensifying partnership. By combining trade expansion, investment scaling, and infrastructure connectivity, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan are positioning themselves as complementary actors in emerging transregional value chains.

Source: APA News, Energy Capital & Power

## INVESTMENT BANKS IN MOROCCO: KEY DRIVERS OF THE KINGDOM’S ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION.

*The rise of independent investment banks in Morocco reflects a broader shift toward more sophisticated financial services, supporting corporate growth, investment structuring, and international expansion.*

In recent years, investment banks have undergone notable development in Morocco, marked by the emergence of independent players. Less visible than traditional financial institutions, they nonetheless play a central role in financing, structuring, and providing strategic advisory services to companies across the Kingdom.

Unlike commercial banks, they do not engage in retail deposit-taking, but instead focus on high value-added operations. As

small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), family-owned groups, and high-growth startups continue to expand,



demand for investment banking services is steadily increasing.

Through their mandates, investment banks are primarily involved in mergers and acquisitions, capital raising, initial public offerings, financial and governance advisory, public-private partnerships, and cross-border transactions linked to international expansion. As Morocco strengthens its positioning as an African financial hub—particularly through initiatives such as Casablanca Finance City— independent investment banks are playing a key role in connecting Moroccan companies with international investors. They support Moroccan groups in their expansion strategies across Africa, assist global funds seeking opportunities in the Kingdom, and structure large-

scale projects requiring complex financial engineering.

Their agility represents a significant competitive advantage. Compared to traditional banks, often constrained by heavier procedures, investment banks are able to operate with greater flexibility and responsiveness, allowing them to intervene more efficiently in dynamic and time-sensitive transactions.

Despite this momentum, the ecosystem in which they operate is still evolving. The market remains relatively concentrated, and the culture of independent financial advisory continues to develop. However, several structural trends are working in their favor, including the increasing complexity of financial operations, the rise of private equity, and the growing

internationalization of Moroccan companies.

As the national economy continues to mature, the role of investment banks is expected to expand further. In an environment where strategic advisory is becoming as critical as financing itself, these discreet yet influential actors are gradually establishing themselves as essential partners in the Kingdom’s economic landscape.

Finance in Morocco is no longer limited to lending. It advises, structures, and transforms. In this transformation, investment banks are taking on a leading role—positioning themselves as one of the key pillars of Morocco’s future economy.

Source: Afrique Diplomatique



Report On

# Halal Trade & Investment in OIC Member States 2025

STRENGTHENING OIC ECONOMIES: LOCAL SOLUTIONS IN A GLOBAL MARKET

DinarStandard

## □ KEY FIGURES

# NIGERIA–UNITED KINGDOM PARTNERSHIP: TRADE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND DATA DRIVING A NEW GROWTH CYCLE

The renewed economic engagement between Nigeria and United Kingdom is underpinned by a series of concrete financial and trade-related developments that illustrate both the scale of existing exchanges and the untapped potential between the two economies.

One of the most significant announcements is the £746 million (approximately \$902 million) financing package backed by UK Export Finance (UKEF) to modernize two of Nigeria's largest ports—Apapa and TinCan Island in Lagos. The total project value reaches nearly \$998.9 million, with UKEF covering 96.19% of the cost under long-term financing conditions. This operation stands as one of the largest export credit-backed infrastructure deals in West Africa, bringing UKEF's total support in the region to over £3 billion.

Beyond infrastructure, the agreement also generates immediate trade flows. At least £236 million in supplier contracts are directed toward British companies, including a £70 million export contract for 120,000 tonnes of steel. These figures illustrate how infrastructure financing can simultaneously stimulate industrial activity in both partner economies while improving trade logistics

capacity.

Trade data further highlights both the strength and the complexity of bilateral exchanges. In 2024, the United Kingdom reported exports to Nigeria valued at approximately £1.7 billion, while Nigeria recorded imports of UK-origin goods at only £504 million. This £1.2 billion discrepancy underscores the importance of improving trade data transparency and coordination. Addressing this gap has become a priority, with both countries agreeing to implement a pre-arrival data exchange system aimed at enhancing compliance, risk management, and revenue assurance.

At the structural level, Nigeria's position as Africa's largest economy by GDP reinforces the strategic importance of this partnership. The United Kingdom, for its part, is scaling up its engagement through broader financing initiatives, including an £11 billion package targeting exporters, particularly SMEs. These mechanisms are designed to facilitate market access while supporting supply chain integration across key sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture,



energy, and consumer goods.

Human capital and diaspora dynamics also play a measurable role. With over one million Nigerians residing in the United Kingdom, remittance flows, business networks, and entrepreneurial activity constitute an additional layer of economic exchange that complements formal trade and investment channels.

Finally, ongoing cooperation between customs authorities is expected to generate efficiency gains through digitalization. The introduction of AI-driven systems, real-time analytics, and enhanced verification platforms is set to streamline border processes, reduce transaction costs, and improve predictability in trade flows.

Taken together, these figures point to a partnership that is increasingly structured around measurable impact—combining

financing scale, infrastructure development, trade facilitation, and data-

driven governance to unlock long-term growth opportunities

Source : Africa News, Global Trade Review.

## BRIEFS

### ➤ **Dhaka, Delhi move to fast-track CEPA talks**

Bangladesh and India accelerate negotiations to conclude a comprehensive economic deal aimed at strengthening bilateral trade, lowering tariff-and non-tariff barriers, attracting investment and deepening economic integration, on March 18th, 2026.

As envisaged, the proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) also aims to help Bangladesh maintain smooth trade access to the Indian market at the next door after its graduation from the least-developed country (LDC) status, while creating new opportunities for businesses, supply chains and economic cooperation in areas such as services, technology, and infrastructure.

Source: Antara

### ➤ **Indonesia, Uzbekistan launch Free Trade Agreement talks**

Indonesian Trade Minister Budi Santoso and the Investment, Industry, and Trade Minister of Uzbekistan, Laziz Kudratov, on Monday March 2nd, 2026, have launched negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Indonesia and Uzbekistan.

The initiative reflects both nations' vision to build an increasingly close, open, and sustainable economic partnership amid evolving global economic dynamics and will expand market access for each country's flagship products, strengthen value chains, and create tangible opportunities for businesses, including micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Source: Antara News

### ➤ **Bangladesh, Indonesia move to fast-track trade pact**

On March 11st, 2026, Bangladesh and Indonesia have agreed to accelerate negotiations on a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to expand bilateral trade and deepen economic cooperation.

The two parties focused on broadening

cooperation across trade and investment, energy, connectivity, and people-to-people exchanges and underlined the importance of concluding the PTA promptly, stressing that timely agreement would benefit economic growth and mutual development.

Source: The Business Standard

### ➤ **Oman, China discuss acceleration of GCC Free Trade Agreement**

H E Ghalib bin Said Al Mamari, Undersecretary of MoCIIP for Commerce and Industry held a formal meeting with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Oman on March 11th, 2026. Both parties focused on the enduring economic relations between the two friendly nations and explored various avenues to expand bilateral trade and investment and expressed a strong commitment to deepening the partnership, noting the significant potential for growth across multiple industrial and commercial sectors.

By prioritizing the finalization of this deal, Oman and China aim to create a more robust framework for economic integration, ensuring long-term mutual benefits and enhanced market access for both GCC and Chinese enterprises.

Source: Muscat Daily

### ➤ **Pakistan advances PTA with Eurasian Economic Union and \$1 billion Russia trade deal**

Pakistani Ambassador to Russia Faisal Niaz Tirmizi has announced the imminent launch of negotiations for a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Russian Federation on February 26th, 2026.

Pakistan's engagement with the EAEU, a Russia-led bloc comprising Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, has gained momentum in recent months.

Source: Times of Islamabad



- Encouraging the development of regular trade exchanges among Member States.
  - Promoting investments aimed at trade development.
  - Contributing to the promotion of productions from Member States and facilitating access to foreign
- 
- Promoting commercial information.
  - Assisting Member States in the field of trade promotion and international trade negotiations.
  - Assisting businesses and economic operators.
- 
- Encouraging contacts between businessmen from Member States.
  - Promoting the products of Member States, including through regular Islamic Fairs and specialized
- 
- Assisting Member States in establishing and organizing Export Promotion Centers.
  - Providing advisory and expertise services to Member States in trade promotion matters.
- 
- Collecting and disseminating trade data.
  - Developing remotely accessible trade databases.
  - Assisting Member States in establishing Documentation Centers and Commercial Information
- 
- Encouraging intra-OIC investments.
  - Promoting foreign investments in OIC Member States.
  - Encouraging partnerships among economic operators from Member States.
  - Providing advisory and expertise services to Member States, particularly in export-oriented investment
- 
- Publishing an Annual Report on intra-Islamic trade.
  - Conducting sectoral studies on products and markets.
  - Studying ways and means to alleviate trade barriers among Member States.
- 
- Organizing seminars and training programs.
  - Assisting Member States in creating a pool of experts in various fields of trade development.
- 
- Assisting Member States in trade negotiations.
  - Preparing and organizing intra-OIC trade negotiations.

# Agenda



- **42<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Follow-up Committee**  
12–13 May 2026 • Ankara, Türkiye
- **OIC African SMEs Forum**  
11–13 June 2026 • Dakar, Senegal
- **16<sup>th</sup> OIC Summit**  
19–20 June 2026 • Baku, Azerbaijan
- **OIC Tourism Fair / UATE Tourism Expo**  
25–27 June 2026 • Kampala, Uganda
- **OIC Business forum on Pharmaceuticals**  
6-7 July 2026 • Dakar, Senegal
- **9<sup>th</sup> OIC Ministerial Conference on Women**  
12–13 July 2026 • Islamabad, Pakistan
- **17<sup>th</sup> OIC–UN General Meeting on Cooperation**  
22–24 July 2026 • Geneva, Switzerland
- **2<sup>nd</sup> OIC Ministerial Conference on Energy**  
October 2026 • Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- **42<sup>nd</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Meeting**  
31<sup>st</sup> October – 3 November 2026 • Istanbul, Türkiye
- **11<sup>th</sup> OIC Halal Expo**  
25–28 November 2026 • Istanbul, Türkiye
- **10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ACMOI**  
9–10 December 2026 • Jeddah, Saudi Arabia



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