ICDT INSIGHTS

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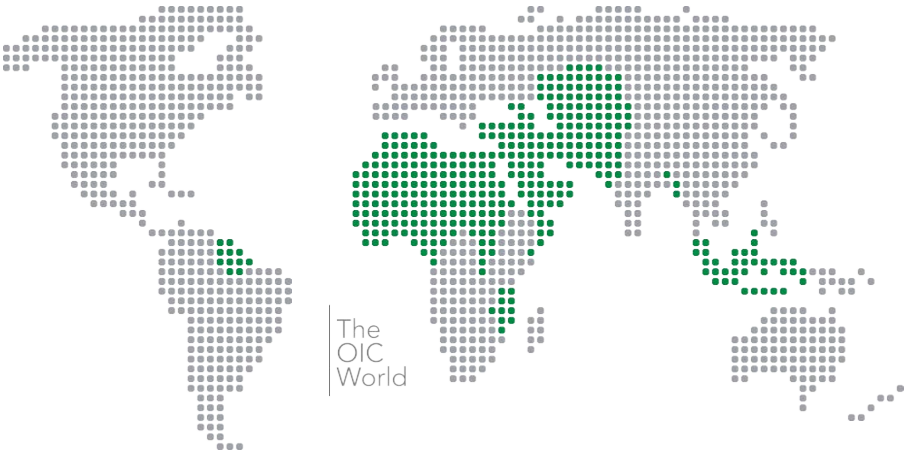

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NEWS ANALYSIS

SAUDI ARABIA FINALIZES $6.4 BILLION INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS WITH SYRIA FOR RECONSTRUCTION ENHANCEMENT.

Saudi Arabia has finalized investment and partnership deals totalling $6.4 billion with Syria, representing a significant move towards the Kingdom's economic re-engagement. The pacts, which include infrastructure, telecommunications, finance, and agriculture, were revealed at the Syrian-Saudi Investment Forum that took place at the presidential palace in Damascus on July 24.

During the forum, Saudi Investment Minister Khalid Al-Falih announced the signing of 47 agreements and memoranda of understanding worth approximately 24 billion Saudi riyals ($6.4 billion). "These agreements establish the groundwork for enduring collaboration and will assist Syria in reconstructing essential sectors," Al-Falih remarked.

Of the total investments, around $2.9 billion will be allocated to infrastructure, with projects including the construction of three new cement factories to aid reconstruction efforts. In the telecommunications sector, Saudi companies will inject $1.07 billion to upgrade Syria's networks and strengthen its cybersecurity capabilities. Partners include Saudi Telecom Co., GO Telecom, Elm, Cipher, and EdTech firm Classera.

Finance and agriculture also became key sectors. A memorandum of understanding was executed between the Saudi Tadawul Group and the Damascus Securities Exchange to enhance collaboration in fintech and capital markets. In the meantime, agricultural collaborations seek to create exemplary farms and processing sectors to improve food security and increase trade dynamics.

Syria's interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa and economy minister Mohammed al-Shaar praised the agreements as "a historic milestone" in the relationship between the two countries. Al-Falih additionally revealed the establishment of a Saudi-Syrian Business Council, aimed at facilitating increased economic cooperation.

The deals are made as Syria aims to reconstruct following 14 years of economic crisis, which challenged infrastructure. The United Nations has projected that the expenses for reconstruction may surpass $400 billion. Earlier this year, the United States officially opened the door for wider international collaboration.

Saudi Arabia's $6.4 billion investment initiative indicates revitalized regional backing for Syria's rebuilding and rejoining the global economy. Focusing on infrastructure, telecommunications, finance, and agriculture, Riyadh establishes itself as a vital ally in Syria's recovery, while also strengthening its overall influence in promoting economic stability in the region

Source: Arab News – Arab Gulf Insight.

KAZAKHSTAN LAUNCHES MAJOR LOGISTICS HUBS TO DRIVE ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Kazakhstan has initiated the building of the Tobyl International Logistics Hub in Kostanay, marking the first of multiple extensive logistics complexes aimed at enhancing the nation's role as a pivotal transit point among China, Central Asia, and Europe. These initiatives are fundamental to the government's approach for updating infrastructure, broadening the economy, and enhancing export competitiveness.

The Tobyl hub, covering 133.6 hectares with an investment of 64 billion KZT ($122 million), is scheduled to be fully operational by 2027. It will integrate into international corridors linking China, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Europe, significantly increasing Kazakhstan's freight capacity. Once completed, the facility will process up to 400,000 TEUs annually, or more than 11 million tons of cargo, and create 500 new jobs in logistics, IT, and related services.

"The complex will reduce logistics costs for businesses, support export-oriented manufacturing, attract investment into processing industries, and stimulate the creation of new enterprises," said Aydyn Alimov, Director of the Tobyl hub.

Equipped with terminals, storage facilities, state-of-the-art customs processing capabilities, and a real-time digital freight tracking system, Tobyl will provide a comprehensive solution that simplifies freight logistics and business processes.

Kazakhstan's Deputy Prime Minister Yermek Kosherbayev emphasized the project's strategic importance, stating, "We are not just building a logistics hub, we are laying the foundation for a new economic geography. Tobyl will serve as an intellectual platform where logistics, digitalization, education, and industry converge."

The initiative reflects Kazakhstan's growing role in Eurasian supply chains. Transit freight volumes reached 16.8 million tons in the first half of 2025, a 4% increase year-on-year. The country's national railway company, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, is simultaneously developing links with logistics centers in Iran, the UAE, and Pakistan to deepen regional integration.

Alongside the Tobyl project, Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov revealed plans to create additional multimodal hubs in Almaty, Astana, and the Kostanay Region by 2027. These advancements are anticipated to strengthen Kazakhstan's connectivity through the East-West and North-South corridors, encompassing the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR).

Kazakhstan's industrial sector is poised to gain directly. Kostanay has become the country's top automotive hub, manufacturing more than 90,000 vehicles in 2024, and a new KIA factory is expected to contribute an additional 70,000 units each year. The expansion of logistics will enhance this growth, facilitating more efficient exports of vehicles, agricultural products, and processed items. Kazakhstan's logistics center plan establishes the nation as a crucial connection in international commerce, while promoting industrial development and economic variety. Through the investment in transport corridors and digital infrastructure, Astana aims to decrease expenses and increase exports, but also to shape a resilient and competitive Eurasian trade landscape.

Source: The Caspian Post, The Times of Central Asia

BURKINA FASO BETS ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

In order to accelerate the country's economic development, the Burkinabe authorities have made the strategic choice to strengthen cooperation between the public and private sectors through a partnership initiative that builds on ongoing and already launched projects. These initiatives fall within the framework of national development priorities and are designed to provide concrete responses to the urgent needs of the population. The targeted sectors—transportation, energy, water, housing, health, and education—reflect the major challenges ahead and call for a strategic public-private partnership to mobilize resources and expertise, foster innovation, and achieve the project's objectives.

Beyond the mere construction of infrastructure and the improvement of living conditions, this project stands out for its potential to enhance skills, create jobs, and stimulate the local economy. It also enables the State to focus on its sovereign functions while relying on the expertise and capacity of the Burkinabe private sector.

In the current context, turning to public-private partnerships can only be beneficial for Burkina Faso. It emerges as a pragmatic and relevant pathway for building the country's sustainable and inclusive development.

With regional competition for investment intensifying, Burkina Faso's approach highlights the importance of smart partnerships as a tool for resilience and growth. By aligning national priorities with private sector dynamism, the government seeks not only to modernize key sectors but also to reinforce social cohesion and lay the foundations for a more equitable economic future.

Source: Etoile du Continent

OIC INVESTMENT FORUM IN AFRICA

DEC 02 - 04 2025

BAMAKO, Republic of Mali

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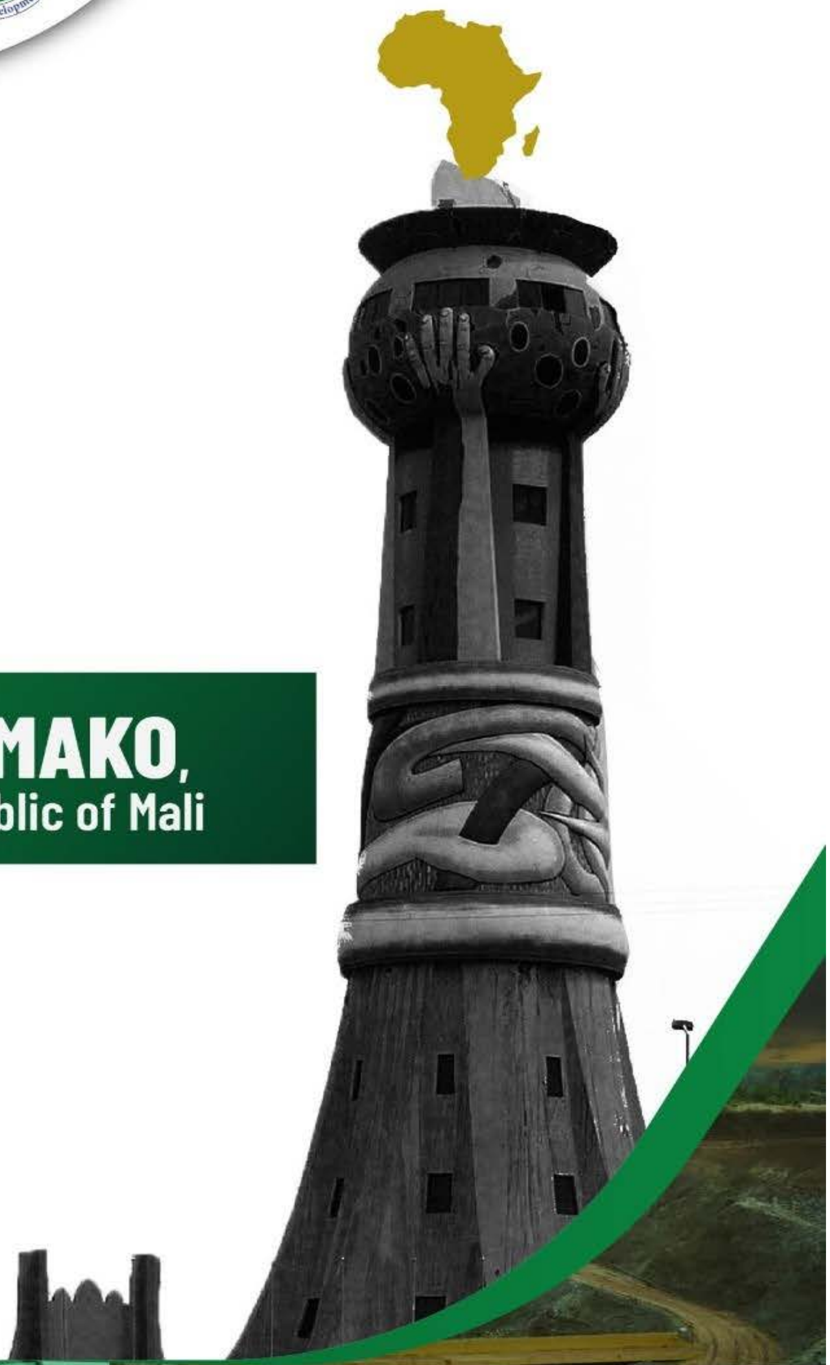
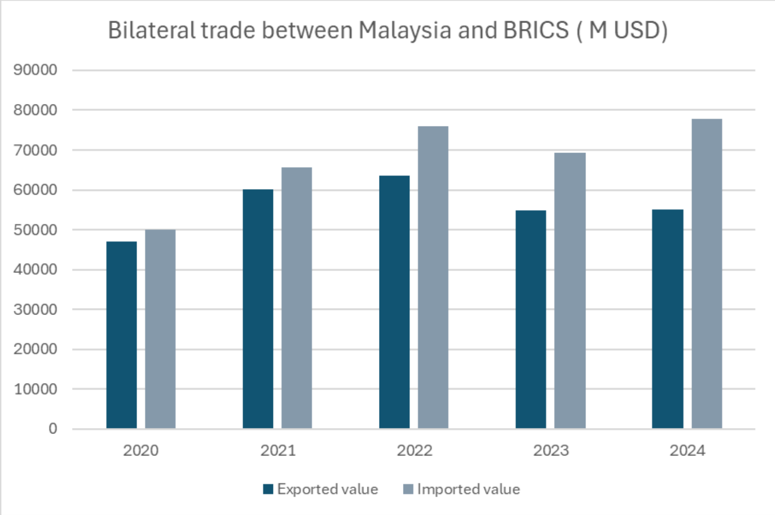


MALAYSIA STRENGTHENS TRADE TIES WITH BRICS COUNTRIES

Malaysia is strengthening its economic ties with BRICS countries while fighting against new US customs measures under the Trump administration. In 2024, more than a third (34%) of Malaysia's total trade was with BRICS economies, amounting to more than 820 billion ringgit ($175 billion), compared with 21.2% (510 billion ringgit/$109 billion) with G7 countries.



In 2024, Malaysia's exports to BRICS nations increased by 11% compared to the previous year, largely attributed to shipments of electronics, palm oil, and natural gas to China and India. Imports from BRICS increased by 9%, indicating greater demand for energy from Russia, pharmaceuticals from India, and agricultural goods from Brazil. Consequently, Malaysia recorded a BRICS trade surplus of RM95 billion ($20.3 billion) in 2024.

During the BRICS summit in Rio de Janeiro (July 2025), Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim emphasized Malaysia's strengthening relationships, stating that “Malaysia already enjoys robust trade and investment connections, even prior to attaining full membership in BRICS.” The nation officially joined BRICS in January 2025, together with Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand, and has requested full membership.

Nonetheless, Malaysia's commerce with the US is facing challenges. In 2023, the trade volume between the US and Malaysia reached 250.25 billion ringgit ($57.2 billion), representing 10% of Malaysia's overall trade, whereas trade with the European Union totalled 206.69 billion ringgit ($47.2 billion).

In early August 2025, Washington reduced tariffs on Malaysian exports from 25% to 19%, but threats related to semiconductors remain serious. The electrical and electronics (E&E) sector, which accounts for more than 40% of Malaysian exports and employs 600,000 people, could be hit hard if the Trump administration imposes 100% tariffs on foreign semiconductor chips. Currently, semiconductors alone account for 54% of Malaysian electronics exports to the US, worth nearly 135 billion ringgit ($31 billion) per year.

In terms of investment, only 6% of Malaysia's foreign direct investment (FDI) flows in 2023 came from BRICS countries, while 25.8% came from G7 countries. China remains the largest BRICS investor in Malaysia, with cumulative FDI exceeding 100 billion ringgit ($22 billion), concentrated in manufacturing and infrastructure.

Malaysia's GDP grew by 4.4% in the second quarter of 2025, slightly below expectations of 4.5%, reflecting global uncertainty. Diversification of export markets toward BRICS countries should help cushion the impact of US protectionism, although analysts warn that the benefits will be gradual rather than immediate.

Malaysia's trade with the BRICS countries, already valued at over $175 billion per year, is growing faster than with its traditional Western partners. However, the US remains essential, particularly for semiconductors. Finding a balance between the 34% share of trade with the BRICS and the combined share of nearly 32% with the G7 and the EU will determine Malaysia's economic trajectory.

Source : Modern Diplomacy, Trade Map, Malaysia Economic Monitor (World Bank)

BRIEFS

➢ Bahrain ratifies Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with UAE

Bahrain and UAE ratified Bilateral investment treaty on June 27th, 2025

Once it enters into force, the Bahrain-UAE BIT will have a term of 10 years with automatic renewal if neither Contracting State has given notice to the contrary.

The Bahrain-UAE BIT contains provisions regarding the development of the digital economy in Bahrain and the UAE. The Contracting States will aspire to cooperate in matters relating to digital commerce, including data protection, data privacy, cyber security, intellectual property rights, consumer protection, electronic documents and signatures, information exchange, capacity building and the exchange of best practices to foster and develop digital technologies and standards.

The Contracting States will also aim to ensure that their laws, regulations and policies which apply to digital commerce are transparent and non-discriminatory.

Source: Bilaterals

➢ Mali signs trade deal with Russia as ties strengthen

Mali and Russia have signed a series of agreements aimed at expanding mutual trade and strengthening economic ties on June 24th, 2025.

The cooperation includes energy, geological exploration, logistics and the humanitarian field.

Source: BBC

➢ UK-GCC free trade deal nears finish line, promises $10.8b boost to two-way trade

The United Kingdom and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are in the final stages of negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), a deal first launched in June 2022.

When signed, it would mark the UK's first such agreement with the GCC bloc, which includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

The proposed FTA is expected to deepen strategic and economic ties between the UK and Gulf states and expand trade in key sectors such as energy, manufacturing, and services. Negotiators have made notable progress on areas including goods, services, and sustainability, according to recent UK government statements.

The UK government projects that the FTA could increase bilateral trade by up to 16%, adding approximately $10.85 billion annually. It could also boost GDP by up to £3.1 billion and increase workers' wages by as much as £1.1 billion by 2035.

Currently, UK-GCC trade stands at around $72.4 billion, with the GCC being the UK's fourth-largest trading partner.

The proposed FTA is expected to include reduction or removal of tariffs on key exports and imports, simplified customs procedures and regulatory alignment, better access for businesses and investors in both regions and opportunities for future bilateral deals with individual GCC countries

Gulf states are targeting growth in industries such as artificial intelligence, digitization, and clean energy—areas where UK firms are well positioned. For GCC investors, the deal offers better access to UK markets and strategic sectors like critical minerals, fintech, and advanced manufacturing.

While no exact date has been confirmed, both sides expect to conclude negotiations by the end of 2025. When successful, the UK-GCC FTA will likely unlock a new chapter of cross-regional investment and trade growth.

Source: Gulf news

- 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

- **5th OIC Regional Cooperation Organizations**
  02-03 October 2025 • Istanbul, Türkiye

- **Business in Komor and ICDT INVEST DAYS - MORONI**
  26-29 August 2025 • Moroni, Comoros

- **Regional Workshop on Road Connectivity and its Impact on Regional Trade in Atlantic Africa through the TIR Convention**
  16-17 September 2025 • Casablanca, Morocco

- **Workshop on the role of credit information in supporting trade and investment decisions**
  20-22 October 2025 • Casablanca, Morocco

- **OIC TOURISM FAIR / AFRICA TOURISM EXPO,**
  23-25 October 2025 • Kampala, Uganda

- **42ND SESSION OF COMCEC**
  01-04 November 2025 • Istanbul, Türkiye

- **HALAL EXPO & WORLD HALAL SUMMIT**
  26-29 November 2025 • Istanbul, Türkiye

- **OIC INVESTMENT FORUM IN AFRICA**
  02-04 December 2025 • Bamako, Mali

- **OIC Cotton, Textiles and Leather Expo**
  03-04 December 2025 • Bamako, Mali

- **9TH ACMOI 1**0-11 December 2025 • Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

- **OIC Invest Days N'Djamena,** 16-17 December 2025, • N'Djaména, Chad

- **OIC Handicraft Expo**, 18-28 December 2025, • Casablanca, Morocco

Islamic Centre
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