



NATIONAL U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

غرفة التجارة الأمريكية العربية الوطنية

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NUSACC LEADERS ADDRESS AUDIENCES NATIONWIDE ON THE ARAB WORLD'S IMPORTANCE AS AN EXPORT DESTINATION AND STRATEGIC PARTNER

Philadelphia Sees MENA Region as a "Market to Watch" in 2017

*National Defense University and Wright-Patterson
Air Force Base Host NUSACC Leadership*

In recent weeks, leaders of the National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) have been busy speaking to audiences across the United States. Below is a sampling of some speaking engagements.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 14th Annual Global Business Conference

For a number of years, NUSACC has supported this important gathering, co-presented by the [World Trade Center \(WTC\) of Greater Philadelphia](#) and the [LeBow College of Business](#) at Drexel University. This year, NUSACC's President & CEO, [David Hamod](#), served as a lead speaker for a panel discussion entitled "The Markets to Watch."



Hamod began his remarks by tracing the long history between Philadelphia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. He pointed out that the ancient Greek city of Philadelphia is today's Amman, the capital city of Jordan. He also noted that when Philadelphia was America's capital, the first country in the world to recognize the fledgling

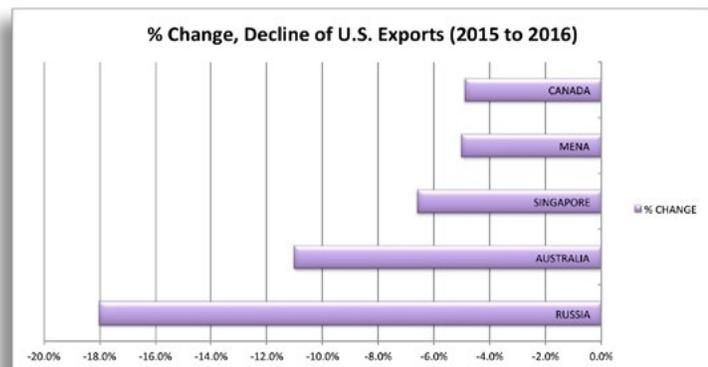
From left to right: Andrea Montanino, Director, Global Business and Economics Program, Atlantic Council; Richard Rossow, Wadhvani Chair in U.S. India Policy Studies, Center for Strategic and International Studies; David Hamod, NUSACC President & CEO; John M. Andersen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Commerce.

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United States – right after independence – was an Arab nation. Hamod went on to highlight more recent partnerships, including Philadelphia’s participation in a “[Partners for Peace](#)” City: Mosul, Iraq.

Hamod said that the MENA region is one the most business-friendly places in the world for U.S. companies, whose products are well recognized for their quality, reliability, and value. A high percentage of the WTC’s members are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), so Hamod highlighted some of the advantages that SMEs have when doing business in the MENA region: relatively lower prices than many multinationals because of lower overheads; innovative, cutting edge technologies; world-class experience and expertise; a growing recognition and desire by companies in the Arab world that want to partner with U.S. companies that are roughly comparable in size.

Around the world, Hamod said, [trade generally fell in 2016](#), and the MENA region was no exception. But the good news, Hamod suggested, is that MENA was much less affected than other major markets, on par with Canada, to which U.S. goods exports dipped only five percent last year. By contrast, exports of U.S. goods to Australia and Russia dropped by 11 percent and 18 percent, respectively. Countries of the Arab world are smaller than some, he suggested, but they have outsized buying power and strategic value to the United States.



A comparison of regional market trends in exports from 2015 to 2016, as analyzed in NUSACC’s [2017 trade data report](#).

Moreover, Hamod said, when MENA is considered in the aggregate – as a region – it is the sixth largest market in the world for American goods.

Philadelphia is well known for its services, health care facilities, and institutions of higher learning, Hamod said, for which there is a large and growing demand in the Arab world. Nonstop travel from Philadelphia to the Arabian Gulf has become easier in recent years, Hamod noted, with the inauguration of nonstop flights between Doha and Philadelphia on Qatar Airways.

Arab world airlines – which offer more than 400 nonstop flights per week to and from the MENA region – are now carrying unprecedented numbers of Arab traders and investors to the United States. This is an opportunity for the State of Pennsylvania, Hamod said, which offers more prospective investments in certain infrastructures than any other State in the Union. Pennsylvania has more than 2,200 bridges that need to be repaired or replaced, for example, as well as 22,000 miles of roads that need replacement or repair.



Linda Conlin, President of the World Trade Center of Greater Philadelphia, with Jim Clifton, Chairman & CEO, Gallup Inc. Clifton delivered an address entitled “Insights on the Forecast Shaping the Global Business Environment.”

... While Greater Philadelphia maintains strong commercial ties with countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, there is much opportunity to connect MENA countries with our region’s strengths in health, education, technology, and architectural and engineering services, among others.”

She concluded, “Thank you for opening this important dialogue. I want to express my heartfelt thanks for your contribution to making our annual Global Business Conference a great success.”

Dayton, Ohio: Wright-Patterson Air Force Base

NUSACC’s Executive Vice President, [Ambassador \(ret.\) Gordon Gray](#), traveled to Dayton, Ohio to give a lecture on the State Department, the Arab Spring, and Tunisia at the Defense Institute of Security Cooperation Studies (DISCS) at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. DISCS is part of the [Defense Security and Cooperation Agency](#) (DSCA), which administers U.S. military assistance, and the students have been assigned to U.S. Embassies.



During his lecture, Gray posited that “the Tunisian revolution may represent a new model of revolution, for four reasons: it was not ideological; it was a grass-roots movement; social media played an essential role; and participants in the revolution did not seek to take power themselves. Rather, they were insisting on shared values such as greater transparency and opportunity.”

Washington, DC: National Defense University

On March 28, Ambassador (ret.) Gordon Gray (who served as the U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia at the start of the Arab Spring) delivered the keynote address to the visiting class of the [Tunisian National Defense Institute](#) (NDI), a year-long interagency course. Distinguished alumni of the course include the Tunisian Ambassador to the United States, [H.E. Fayçal Gouia](#). Gray discussed strategy and policy-making and U.S. support for Tunisia’s transition from authoritarian rule to a more open and transparent political and economic system. “The NDI class includes members of civil society as well as the government, and represents the ‘whole of government’ approach to problem-solving that will serve the Tunisian people well,” Gray said.



Ambassador (ret.) Gordon Gray, NUSACC Executive Vice President, delivered the keynote address to the visiting class of the Tunisian National Defense Institute.

Gray told the class that “it is important to underscore that Tunisia enjoys bipartisan support in Washington. President Obama met with Béji Caid Essebsi in October 2011 when he was Prime Minister, and again in May 2015 after Caid Essebsi’s election as President. President Trump called your President after just four weeks on the job, and [Foreign Minister Jhinaoui](#) was one of the first Foreign Ministers to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson.” Concluding, he shared his assessment that “U.S. Government support for the Tunisian transition will continue.”

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For more information on the benefits of membership in NUSACC, please click [HERE](#).

The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, widely regarded as the voice of American business in the Arab world, is in touch with business communities across the United States and serves as the U.S. point of contact for the national chambers of commerce in the 22 Arab nations. On a daily basis, NUSACC works closely with leaders throughout the Arab world, as well as high-level decision makers in the U.S. business community, public policy research centers, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the U.S. Government.

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