



AUSTRALIA
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Media release

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Melbourne to host major Australia-North Africa business event

Strong growth in trade and investment forecast between Australia and North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia)

Melbourne's business community will be treated to a highly informative and insightful briefing on investment opportunities in North Africa. This is a region that is expected to expand rapidly in the coming years, as experts predict their economies to enjoy a surge in growth.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), along with the Victorian Government's Department of Business and Innovation (DBI), will be partnering the peak national body for Australia-Arab trade and commerce, the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AACCI), in hosting this major event.

The *North Africa Business Briefing* will feature an introduction by the Australian Prime Minister's Special Envoy to Francophone African countries, Mr. William Fisher, who will talk about the emerging relationships between Australia and North Africa. He will focus on new opportunities in relations with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

The special feature of the event will be presentations by the Ambassadors to Canberra of the aforementioned three North African countries, who will be speaking about the various business and investment opportunities between Australia and their respective countries. Trade and investment between Australia and French-speaking North Africa is growing, and there is room for significantly more commercial activity between the countries mentioned.

“I recently visited Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and I will talk about Australia’s relations with those countries during the upcoming briefing,” said Mr. Fisher. “It is a growing relationship with these three countries, especially with the new developments in that region. Given that two of those North African countries have new governments there are more opportunities for Australia in that region.”

“I recently met with the senior leadership of those three North African countries in my capacity as the Australian Prime Minister’s Special Envoy to French-speaking African countries,” mentioned Mr. Fisher. “There is potential for stronger commercial relations between Australia and Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in the years ahead.”

The *North Africa Briefing* has already attracted significant attention from the Melbourne business community. The event is being hosted at the Victorian Government Investment Centre at Level 46, 55 Collins Street, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm on Thursday, 9th February.

“AACCI is very happy to partner with DFAT and DBI in this very special event featuring business opportunities for Australia in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and vice versa,” said Roland Jabbour, chairman of AACCI’s Victoria Chapter. “The business community in Melbourne is lucky to have Mr. Fisher talk about commercial opportunities between North Africa and Australia, especially given his extensive knowledge of the North African region and his recent official visits to those three countries.”

Australia’s trade and general relations with North Africa cover a range of sectors. But new opportunities are beginning to open up, especially in light of the fact that Australia and the North African region are doing relatively well, in comparison to the soft global economic scenario.

“AACCI is keen to promote further trade and commerce between the two regions, not just in the traditional sectors but newer ones as well,” explained Mr. Jabbour. “And there are always opportunities in the travel and tourism sectors, in addition to the demand for Australian expertise in environmental technology, education and other specialized services.”

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