

Mandate of President

Mohamed Choucair

2012 - 2017



ASCAME





Note of the President

Upon leaving the bow of the ASCAME that had harvested the great waves of the Mediterranean during these years of crisis with an Olympian calm, it seems clear to me that this is the most important moment of the entire mandate; I leave a solid and effective organization, with a succession equal to its destiny.

When one leaves the office with the consciousness of full duty, one remains present in the accomplished work and the cooperation which has no reason to cease; but, on the contrary, finds multiple ways to be achieved.

In 2012, two years had passed since the global crisis invaded Europe and the whole of the Mediterranean. Unemployment reached unprecedented levels since the Second World War, and the Arab spring, welcomed politically and socially, complicated the economic reality of the countries of the South.

ASCAME had to keep the cohesion of its members and the coherence of its programs against all odds. This cohesion is based on three pillars: the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation, which has housed the Association since its creation in the 1980s; the effective and devoted members of its Executive Council and its directors; the immense network it has built in the Mediterranean and at the international level.

ASCAME would be the economic arm of the Union for the Mediterranean; unfortunately the projects have been delayed due to the global crisis. However, everything that can be done with limited means is being done. Together we have laid the foundations of the Mediterranean Arbitration, promoted women's rights in the region, ensured the protection of the environment, encouraged Mediterranean tourism, designed and promoted a more human city; along with so many other projects.

Cooperation with the European Union has grown further. A hundred or so projects to upgrade the region and the company have been channeled to the chambers; some have played a decisive role in the organization and development of these projects, which corresponded perfectly to the mission of the chambers, notably the Chamber of Marseilles, and the Chamber of Beirut and Mt-Lebanon.



Regular events organized by ASCAME in cooperation with one or other of the Mediterranean chambers, have developed year after year in favor of tourism, industry, technology and urban planning, and the environment, in response to the economic decline in the region.

The flagship of the activities was and continues to be the Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders, which is held every year, bringing together the leaders of the public and private sectors from all the countries where the ASCAME is present. This event contributes, consciously or unconsciously, in achieving better cooperation and coherence among professional organizations working for the good of all and the progress of nations.

Taking the direction of the ASCAME was an adventure in every respect, happy and useful regionally. May I thank the First Vice-President, Mr. Miquel Valls and the Vice-Chairmen of the Executive Committee, for their full cooperation; General Coordinator Mr. Anwar Zibaoui and all the officials who assumed their daily tasks and their exemplary dedication.

And I wish my successor full success in his task at the service of the Mediterranean, while assuring him of my unwavering support.

Mohamed Choucair



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Introduction

Mohamed Choucair, President of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount-Lebanon, and the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Lebanon, was elected as President of ASCAME on 12 February 2012 and took over his functions three months later, during the 22nd Ordinary General Assembly held in Istanbul on 1 June 2012. The mandate of President Mohamed Choucair was renewed by the Executive Committee in Tangiers in 2014 for a new period of two years with the aim of carrying on with the work he has started.

His mandate has been characterized by the aspiration to strengthen the role of ASCAME within the Euro-Mediterranean decision-making organizations, in particular through reinforcing the Association's openness to regional strategic actors, institutions and socio-economic organizations, while initiating several stages for action.

He also paid great attention to improving the communication's tools and the Association's image in order to offer the Mediterranean private sector a wider visibility and legitimacy at the regional level, but also overseas.

The two main pillars of his mandate have been the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and the consolidation of the economic relations in the Mediterranean.

On 9 May 2012, Mohamed Choucair was awarded the National Order of Merit – Grade Knight – by the President of the French Republic, Mr. François Hollande. On 27 December 2013, he was granted the Order of Merit - Grade Officer - by the President of the Republic of Italy Mr. Giorgio Napolitano. On 26 April 2014, he was honored with the Lebanese Order of Merit – First Class – by his Excellency, General Michel Sleiman, President of the Lebanese Republic. On 6 October of the same year, he was granted the Order of Friendship of the Russian Federation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. On 6 December 2016, he was decorated with the Cross of the Order of the Civil Merit – Grade Officer – granted by His Majesty Felipe VI, King of Spain.

On 23 November 2016, President Choucair has been nominated Honorary Consul of the Republic of Fiji to Lebanon.

1. Featured achievements of ASCAME under the mandate of President Mohamed Choucair

a- Approval of the ASCAME Rules of Procedure

Under the mandate of President Mohamed Choucair, **ASCAME has adopted its Rules of Procedure.**

During the meeting of the ASCAME Executive Committee held in Barcelona on 20 November 2013, the new Rules of Procedure for the Treasurer, the Secretariat General and the Secretary General were approved and have been added to the Rules of Procedure for the Commissions and Working Groups; the Financial Management, the Financing and Budget Expenditures which had been previously approved and ratified in 2009 during the General Assembly in Beirut.

b- A result-oriented Communication Strategy

ASCAME, as a consolidated entity representing the interests of the private sector in the Mediterranean, but also as an accredited partner of the EU and international organizations, is continually adapting its communication actions to face changing scenarios in the region. In fact, ASCAME offers communication tools capable of **bringing effective answers to the opportunities and challenges facing the Chambers of Commerce and, particularly, the Mediterranean SMEs.** During the President's mandate, actions in this regard have strongly focused on the maintenance and strengthening of the **ASCAME members' visibility.**

The result-oriented communication strategy during this presidency mandate, comprised three communication axis: **institutional, events and projects** that have actively reached out to Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and businesses, regional business communities, organizations and international institutions, governments, civil society and media.

The **ASCAME website** has been a useful communication tool to communicate news related to activities and projects developed by the Association and ASCAME's members. The same for the web that is dedicated to the ASCAME annual event and the Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders. Both webs have improved their number of page visits and new visitors during the last years. The webpage also offers an extranet access to the members of the Association so that the exchange of information becomes more transparent and flowing.



During President Choucair's mandate, ASCAME closely followed and pronounced on regional topics of particular relevance in our present situation. ASCAME has delivered **several institutional statements** published on the press, social media channels and website. Communication actions also included a wide range of publications (press releases, brochures, leaflets and reports) about our events and projects' activities.

Several efforts have also been exerted to allow the Association to be more active and present on the **social media networks** which represent nowadays essential communication tools. The social media channels (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube, among others) of ASCAME have also contributed to improve the visibility of the Association's image to wider audiences across the Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries.



During this period, the latest information regarding the regional economy and Mediterranean countries business opportunities were updated on ASCAME social media channels, as well as information about our members and chambers' plans and activities.



In this sense, posts' interactions were largely improved with an increasing number of mentions and new prominent followers. For instance:





Under the mandate of President Choucair, ASCAME has also launched the **bi-monthly ASCAME MedaNews**, which keeps hundreds of interested subscribers updated.

ASCAME Communication 2014-2017 in figures

ASCAME Communication Annual Figures:

-Increase by 20% of the number of page visits

-Hundreds of subscribers to ASCAME MedaNews

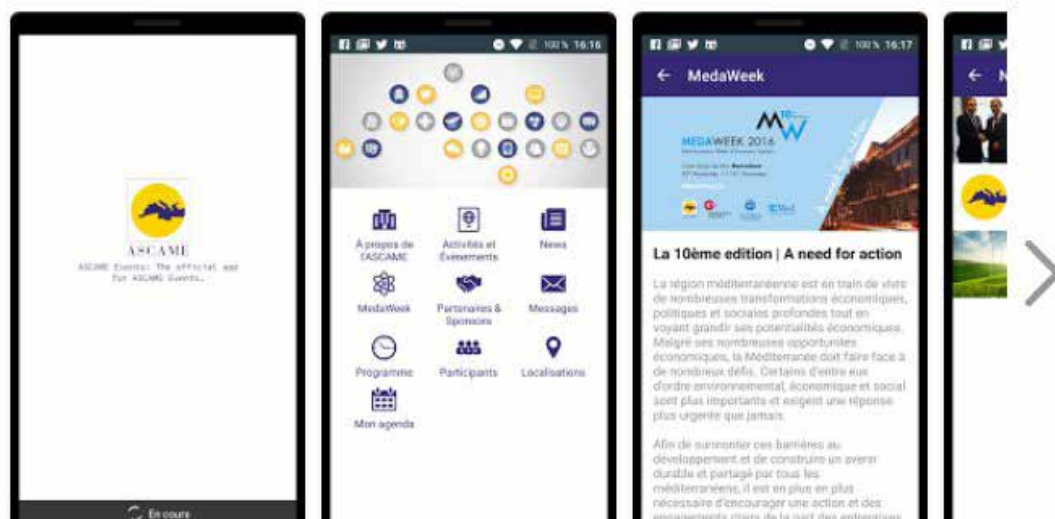
- **> 200 Press releases** about ASCAME events, projects' outputs and institutional statements

- **> 800 ASCAME related articles** published on the media

- **> 900 media contacts** and multiple media partners

New Official APP for ASCAME Events: Increasing the active participation of our audience

During Choucair's mandate, ASCAME has also launched its new **ASCAME Events App**. The new ASCAME Events App is the (mobile/tablet) app for ASCAME regional activities and events. The interaction function of this application has become a true added value complementing the other available communication tools (web, newsletter, social media, etc...).





Finally, under the last period of Mohamed Choucair's presidency, a **Strategic Communication Plan** has been designed, as well as the deployment of a series of initiatives to underline ASCAME's capacities and the outcome of its operations, which represent a vital engagement of the President's mandate. The implementation of this strategy is expected to be a turning point in favor of ASCAME's advancement that should give the Association an incontestable standing to strengthen cooperation in the Mediterranean and with the European Union in relation to regional and international actors.

c- Creation of the « ASCAME » label for the Mediterranean Arbitration and Mediation Centers

On 20 November 2013, the CCIA-BML signed the convention granting the « ASCAME » label to the Lebanese Arbitration and Mediation Center, thereby awarding the Center the status of ASCAME Arbitration and Mediation Center.

The 11 conditions for granting the ASCAME label to the Mediterranean Arbitration and Mediation Centers have also been approved by the members of the Executive Committee.

d- Opening of an ASCAME liaison office in Saudi Arabia

The opening of an ASCAME Liaison Office in Saudi Arabia represents a major step in the realization of one of the objectives announced in the strategic plan of the Association: promoting the Mediterranean and its enterprises worldwide. Saudi Arabia, one of the twenty first world economies, and the prime exporter of oil, is today regarded as the engine of the economies of the Gulf and is replete with many opportunities for the Mediterranean.

The establishment of this Liaison Office will provide the ASCAME members with the opportunity of benefiting from the following services free of charge:

- Issuing of invitation letters to the members who wish to visit Saudi Arabia
- A fully equipped office space will be provided to the visiting members
- A fully equipped multimedia boardroom will be put at the disposal of members subject to a prior planning



- Secretarial services will also be offered
- B2B meetings with potential Saudi customers will be organized
- Data about potential Saudi customers will be shared
- Legal services will be offered for the creation and establishment of enterprises in Saudi Arabia

Moreover, in order to establish and consolidate links between the Saudi and the Mediterranean markets, several forums and sectorial economic exhibitions will be organized in Saudi Arabia.

e- 20+20 Declaration

In the framework of the 20 years of the Barcelona Declaration and the Euro-Mediterranean Integration process, and under the ASCAME and President Choucair's initiative, 20 strategic economic initiatives supported by a wide range of regional and international organizations have been set out in the **20+20 Declaration**.



This Declaration is expected to provide a joint action plan so as to give new impetus to the Euro-Mediterranean integration, with the key support of the private sector in collaboration with the public sector. This innovative roadmap identifies the central and strategic place of the private sector in a process shared between the public and private sector, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

f- A new vision for ASCAME as a catalyst for social and sustainable progress

Under the leadership of President Choucair, ASCAME has strengthened the social dimension of the regional economic growth, especially by encouraging the empowerment of women, young entrepreneurs and the diaspora who represent key catalysts of development.

President Choucair has paid a great attention to the regional initiatives aimed at reinforcing the role of key actors in the Mediterranean and promoting a Mediterranean society based on equality of opportunities for all, as stated in the 20+20 Declaration.



By supporting existing social projects such as HOMERe (***High Opportunity for Mediterranean Executive Recruitment***), Med4Job or Med NC (***New Chance***) and by proposing the launching of new tools such as ERASMUS for the Mediterranean, ASCAME has positioned itself as a catalyst of social progress and a promoter for gender equality and youth integration in the region.

On the other hand, sustainable development has become increasingly important in our activities of the last years. ASCAME has been part in many initiatives promoting sustainable and green development, such as the Mediterranean civil society forum of MedCop21 and MedCop22. As representative of SMEs, ASCAME organized in MedCop's frame two workshops entitled «focus MSEs/SMEs: The Mediterranean Companies facing Climate Change» and «Supporting the massive development of Green Economy in the Mediterranean».

On these occasions, a kit of initiatives – following the UN Sustainable Development Goals were presented to efficiently support and accompany the regional businesses in their adaptation and resilience to green and sustainable business practices for a better return on invested capital.



2. ASCAME's Avenues for Cooperation - Signature of Agreements



Under the mandate of President Choucair, further steps were undertaken toward new partnerships and avenues for cooperation to the benefit of the region's private sector. More than fifteen agreements were signed with high-level organizations working in the field of regional development.

a- Signature of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- **EIB (European Investment Bank): 27 November 2012, Marseille**

The enhanced collaboration between ASCAME and the EIB shall take into due consideration those elements required in order to develop an investment friendly environment and, thus, foster private sector initiatives in the Mediterranean region, which represents the basis for sound, sustainable and long- lasting economic growth.

- **FMBA (Mediterranean Federation of Insurance Brokers): 16 September 2013, Beirut**

Through this MoU, the two parties agreed to cooperate in order to contribute to the creation of effective and sustainable networks between the chambers of commerce and insurance brokers in the Mediterranean region.





- **FEMOZA (World Federation of Free Zones): 20 November 2013, Barcelona**

The objective of this agreement is to contribute to the creation of an efficient and sustainable network amongst the Mediterranean free zones and to promote them worldwide to investors.





- **AFAEMME (Association of Organizations of Mediterranean Business Women) :**
20 November 2013, Barcelona

The objective of this agreement is to contribute to the creation of a networking platform for businesswomen and women entrepreneurs from all over the Mediterranean as well as to the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean lobby organization.





- **UNIMED (Mediterranean Universities Union):** 20 November 2013, Barcelona

This Memorandum of Understanding between ASCAME and UNIMED covers cooperation in the field of academic research and employability centers at university level, and aimed in particular at a better understanding of socio-economic issues in the region providing support to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.



- **MEDCITIES (Network of Mediterranean Coastal cities):** 20 November 2013, Barcelona

This MoU was signed with the purpose of establishing a framework of cooperation that will contribute to improve the capacity of local administrations in the Mediterranean region with regards to sustainable urban development, and to empower municipalities in developing countries, mainly the Mediterranean countries, by encouraging an intelligent economic development in the Mediterranean sea basin.



- **Network of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the Mediterranean:**
3 June 2014, Barcelona

Through this agreement, ASCAME is committed to strengthening its social role in the Mediterranean region by providing its support to all associations of the Red Cross and Red Crescent from the Mediterranean shore.





- **MEDCRUISE (Association of Mediterranean Cruise Ports) : 26 November 2014, Barcelona**

Through this MoU, ASCAME and MEDCRUISE decided to cooperate and contribute to the creation of an efficient and sustainable network between the Mediterranean Cruise Ports and the creation of synergies with the Mediterranean private sector, with the final aim to support the Mediterranean region, its people and its businesses all over the world.





- **BUSINESSMED (Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises):**
26 November 2014, Barcelona

The present MoU seeks to support the social and economic development of the Mediterranean Business Community and maximizing bilateral and multilateral Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.





- **ICCWCF (International Chamber of Commerce – World Chamber Federation):**
26 November 2014, Barcelona

By signing this MoU, ASCAME and the ICC-WCF showed their commitment to foster the role of the Mediterranean Business Community by establishing links with other international businesses for a stronger cooperation between them.





- **MBN (Mediterranean Bank Network) : 03 March 2016, Barcelona**

By signing this agreement, ASCAME and MBN committed themselves to promote investments in the Mediterranean region, and to provide funding for SMEs and start-ups. Both parties agreed to closely collaborate in identifying projects, organizing events and initiatives focused on the collaboration between banks, businesses and chambers of commerce, and the creation of lines of financing support for SMEs, start-ups, entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs.

- **UfM (Union for the Mediterranean) : 30 November 2016, Barcelona**

Following the signature of a strategic MoU on 26 November 2014 in Barcelona, ASCAME and the UfM Secretariat signed the renewal of this agreement aimed at promoting business participation and private sector involvement in key activities and projects essential to the prosperous development of the Mediterranean region





- **MH&RA (Mediterranean Hotels and Restaurants Association):**
01 December 2016, Barcelona

The present MoU was signed in the context of the initiatives undertaken by both parties with the purpose to support the growing hospitality industry in the Mediterranean as a facilitator for the economic and social development of the region. In this sense, the Parties agreed to contribute to the creation of an efficient and sustainable network between the Mediterranean Hospitality representatives and to promote synergies with the Mediterranean private sector with the final aim to support the Mediterranean region, its people and its businesses all over the world.

- **ESMED (Euro-Mediterranean Network of Social Economy) :**
02 December 2016, Barcelona

Through this agreement, ASCAME and ESMED expressed their will to collaborate in order to further encourage the involvement of the Mediterranean private sector and economic actors in this Economy which represents great potential for development. In the Mediterranean region, the Social Economy (SE) represents more than 900.000 organisations, 100 million of individuals associated and 8 million employments. In the last years, its role has become even more important as partnering with public and private agents, the Social Economy enterprises and organisations offer responses to many relevant regional challenges such as youth unemployment, social innovation as well as rural and local development.



- **UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) : 18 January 2017, Madrid**

ASCAME and UNWTO signed a memorandum of understanding to promote the development of sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean region. As recognized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the private sector has a key role in achieving its objectives and, therefore, its collaboration with the regional private sector entity, ASCAME, becomes crucial. Both entities will continue to work together on strategies that promote responsible tourism, driving regional sustainable development and catalysing positive changes in the region.



b- Other lines of collaboration

Under the mandate of President Choucair, ASCAME has also initiated ambitious lines of collaboration with key organisations involved in regional development, including the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (ERBD)**, **the Economist**, **UNIDO**, the **International Trade Center (ICT)** and many others.

3. Institutional bilateral meetings and official visits of President Mohamed Choucair

Since 2012, President Mohamed Choucair has been in contact with high level personalities in order to promote the Mediterranean economic actors and companies, mainly the SMEs in the region, as well as to encourage the integration and consolidation of the Euro-Mediterranean area.

On 23 July 2012, President Mohamed Choucair met with the President of the Catalan Government, **Mr. Artur Mas** and **the Secretary General, Mr. Fathallah Sijilmassi**. During this meeting, the strategic links between ASCAME and the UfM were discussed, as well as their importance for the development of the Mediterranean strategies. President Choucair also underlined the key role of the European Commission for the future of the region.





On 14 September 2012 in Beirut, President Mohamed Choucair met with the **Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Lino Cardarelli** to discuss the means that should be put in place to help SMEs in the region.





On 11 September 2012, President Mohamed Choucair met with **the Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), Mr. Philippe de Fontaine Vive**, to discuss the creation of an assistance program for SMEs. Mr. Choucair and Mr. de Fontaine Vive met again on 11 June 2014 in Beirut to reinforce the actions in which ASCAME and the EIB are committed in favor of the region.





He also met with **the President of the French Republic, Mr. François Hollande**, on 4 June 2013 in Marseille during the inauguration of the CMA-CGM Jules Vernes' container and held several meetings with the **President of the Lebanese Republic, General Michel Sleiman**.

On 9 October 2014, in Beirut, President Choucair met with the **General Secretary of the UfM, Mr. Fathallah Sijilmassi** and with the **Deputy General Secretary, Ms. Delphine Borione** and the **Special Advisor to the General Secretary's cabinet, Mr. Moez Sinaoui** to discuss common actions.





President Choucair met, on 20 June 2016, Mr. Carlos Ghosn the **Chairman and CEO of France-based Renault, Chairman and CEO of Japan-based Nissan, and Chairman of Mitsubishi Motors** during the Lebanon Climate Action to exchange ideas on how engaging the private sector to address climate challenges.





On 24 October 2016, President Choucair met the **President of the Republic of Fiji**, George Konrote, to discuss international trade and business opportunities in the Mediterranean, especially regarding Tourism and Logistics.



4. Participation and representation of President Choucair on behalf of ASCAME and the Mediterranean private sector

During his mandate, President Mohamed Choucair has participated in major events on behalf of ASCAME and in representation of the Mediterranean private sector with the objective to give further visibility to our Association, enhance partnerships with Euro-Mediterranean organizations and support initiatives in favor of regional development.

On 26-27 November 2012 in Marseille, President Choucair participated in the **XI FEMIP Conference (Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership)** in support of the socio-economic development of the Mediterranean partner countries.





President Choucair participated on 24-25 January 2013 in **the meeting of the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs of Social Affairs and Education of the Union for the Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (PA-UfM)** held at the Chamber of Deputies in Rome. During this meeting, two essential topics were discussed: the transformation of FEMIP into a Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank and the development of business opportunities and investments in the Southern Mediterranean.



On 15 October 2013 in Istanbul, President Choucair was represented during the **Global Chamber Platform** organized by **EUROCHAMBRES** with the aim of promoting the cooperation between the Chambers of Commerce and improving the Mediterranean and European business environments.

President Mohamed Choucair participated in **the 9th Ministerial Meeting on Industrial Cooperation** held in Brussels on 19 February 2014, which brought together 43 ministers from the UfM's member countries to discuss the challenges of the industrial cooperation. It is the first time that a high representative is invited to defend the private sector at this ministerial meeting during which the Ministerial Declaration was adopted as well as the Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation 2014-2015 Work Programme.



A speech of President Mohamed Choucair was delivered during the **Business for Peace** held in Mersin, in Turkey on 1 April 2014. On this occasion, the President highlighted the importance of ASCAME in strengthening dialogue & cooperation among its members in order to attain the objectives of peace in the Mediterranean, mainly through the promotion of economic and social activities as instruments of peace, collaboration and reconciliation. The President stressed on the importance of joining efforts to further progress through a more active economic dialogue in which the Union for the Mediterranean can play a key role.

On 16 April 2014 in Dubai, President Choucair was represented during the **MENA-OECD working group on energy and infrastructures** « Financing the renewable energies in the MENA region ». This meeting took place in the framework of the **World Green Economic Summit** on 15-16 April. The event brought together world leaders, thinkers and decision-makers from the Middle East and the Maghreb to explore the challenges of sustainability, to think of solutions, and to work towards developing public-private partnerships that will contribute to a “more sustainable” future.

On 13 June 2014 in Beirut, the President participated in **the General Assembly of the World Federation of Insurance Brokers (FMBA)**, during which the Memorandum of Understanding between ASCAME and the FMBA was signed. In this meeting, Choucair stressed the importance of the insurance companies as well as the North-South alliances in the Mediterranean as key driving forces for regional development and prosperity.





President Choucair participated in the **Business Med Forum** held on 26 March 2015 in Venice, and organized by the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BusinessMed), one of the main ASCAME partner, in collaboration with the General Confederation of Italian Industry COFINDUSTRIA.

President Mohamed Choucair gave key-note address during the **High Level Meeting of UfM about the role of the private sector in the strengthening of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership** in Barcelona, Spain on 13-14 April 2015.

The focus of the High Level Meeting was on areas of mutual interest between the EU and Southern partners, and mainly on the "Role of private sector in the region in fostering inclusive growth, public-private partnerships and the informal economy".

President Mohamed Choucair participated on 27 February 2016 in the **International Symposium about Business Opportunities in Algeria** organized by the General Confederation of Algerian Businesses.





The President of ASCAME, Mohamed Choucair, participated in the **24th edition of the «Arab Economic Forum»** on 12 May 2016 organized under the patronage of the President of the Council of Ministers, H.E. Mr. Tammam Salam, Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group, in collaboration with the Central Bank of Lebanon, the Association of Banks in Lebanon and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group.





On 26 May 2016, President Choucair participated in the **General Assembly of General Confederation of Italian Industry (Cofindustria)**

President Choucair has been represented on 24-25 October 2016 at the **Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions** aimed at promoting greater understanding of the main issues affecting organized civil society in the Euromed region.

President Choucair participated on 26 April 2017 in Beirut, in the 7th edition of the **Beirut International Franchise Forum and Exhibition – BIFEX** where he underlined the importance to support SMEs and to promote industries such as franchise and retail sales as they constitute the main drivers of economic growth in this dynamic country of Southern Mediterranean.



5. Consolidation of key ASCAME events. Building Strategic Partnerships



a- Mediterranean Transport and Logistics Summit (Meda Logistics Summit)

The two-day event is jointly organized annually by ASCAME with the Consorci of Barcelona, and the support of the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Every year since 2003, the Meda Logistics Summit convenes experts, business representatives and high level policy figures from the sector in order to explore opportunities and address key priorities in the Mediterranean. Over the course of 14 years, the event has enjoyed an overall average participation of 9,100 participants and 13,200 respective business contacts.

Main topics explored during the Meda Logistics Summit:

- ✓ The challenges, opportunities and perspectives for the transport and logistics sector
- ✓ Spain – Gulf and Mediterranean region : strategic partners
- ✓ Logistics Mediterranean challenges for air, sea & rail
- ✓ Prospects for a new Mediterranean Logistic agency?
- ✓ Business opportunities in the Mediterranean, and South East Europe (MSEE)
- ✓ Start-ups and Innovation within the sector
- ✓ Women in Logistics and Transport
- ✓ Special Session on EU Project: EUROMED Invest presents Transport & Logistics Sector Alliance Committee
- ✓ Special Focus Session: Egypt
- ✓ Euro-Mediterranean Railway: A Mediterranean Express – New Ambitions are Born
- ✓ The Mediterranean Ports Competition and Co-operation: The Consequences of making Big Projects for the Ports
- ✓ Mediterranean's Ports: A Gateway to Europe, Asia and Africa
- ✓ Presentation of EU Investment Plan for the Port of Barcelona
- ✓ Intermodal Transport in the region



- ✓ The effects of Climate change and sustainable development of the Ports and Maritime sectors
- ✓ Morocco, the Logistical Bridge in Africa
- ✓ Looking Beyond the Sea – Port, City and Cruise Tourism
- ✓ Business opportunities and enterprise experiences in the Mediterranean Logistics and Transport sector





b- Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders (MedaWeek)

The Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders is today an iconic economic conference dedicated to promoting the Mediterranean, its key economic sectors and cultural values on a global level. The event serves as a reference point for voicing the interests of the private sector in the socioeconomic development of the region.

Since its debut in 2005, MedaWeek Barcelona has been jointly organized by the Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME) and the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation, and with the collaboration of prominent Euro-Mediterranean organizations.

MedaWeek Barcelona is a must-attend event for businesses, corporations, governments and multilateral organizations from both sides of the Mediterranean basin. With over a decade of success, MedaWeek continues to provide a dynamic platform for the promotion of a strong Euro-Mediterranean alliance and regional economic integration.

Throughout the last editions, over 15.000 businessmen and businesswomen have participated and attended this major event.

Some of the Main topics explored during MedaWeek:

- ✓ North Africa Business Development Forum (NABDF)
- ✓ Mediterranean Women Entrepreneurs Forum
- ✓ Eco Meda Green Summit
- ✓ Mediterranean Solar Forum
- ✓ Global Eco Forum
- ✓ Economic Intelligence Forum
- ✓ Human Capital Forum
- ✓ Mediterranean Social Economy Forum
- ✓ Mediterranean Startups & Entrepreneurs Forum
- ✓ Mediterranean City Forum



- ✓ Mediterranean Automotive Forum
- ✓ Mediterranean Hospitality Forum
- ✓ Free Trade & Special Economic Zone Forum
- ✓ Mediterranean Halal Forum
- ✓ Islamic Finance Forum

Under President Mohamed Choucair's mandate, MedaWeek Barcelona has represented an excellent platform to launch strategic initiatives and to bring out key messages to the private sector:

- ▷ Celebrating in parallel the 20 years of the Barcelona Declaration and the Euro-Mediterranean Integration process, MedaWeek 2015 has offered the opportunity to present the **20+20 Declaration**, a set of 20 strategic economic initiatives supported by a wide range of regional and international organizations.
- ▷ On this occasion, **ASCAME and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) have issued a joint statement** expressing the importance of working together in order to foster regional development and to give new impetus to the Euro-Mediterranean integration's process, with the key support of the private sector, and in collaboration with the public sector.
- ▷ The **joint statement between ASCAME and the Network of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** of the Mediterranean was presented during MedaWeek 2015 with the aim to encourage the Chambers of Commerce and companies to get involved, along with the civil society, the governments and the international organizations in favor of the refugees. Through this Statement, both entities recognize the contribution of the civil society and the private-public partnership in the management of the migration crisis, in particular, their role in facilitating the job insertion of the refugees and offer them the opportunity to rebuild their lives, to be self-sufficient and to contribute to the economic development of their host countries.
- ▷ The 2016's edition "A need for Action" has been the occasion to celebrate the **10th Anniversary** of this main event, while underlying the importance of job creation and entrepreneurial initiatives.



For MedaWeek, this milestone Anniversary was not only a celebration of a decade of service to the Mediterranean private sector, but also a tribute to commitment and the power of partnership. It was, moreover, an opportunity to stand up for the cause closest to ASCAME's heart: the Euro-Mediterranean partnership through the key role of the private sector.



▷ Also, on the occasion of its 10th Anniversary, the MedaWeek established MedaWeek Advisory Council. This Council is an advisory committee dedicated to steering the economic and commercial agenda of this regional and international flagship event.



Concretely, members' roles consist in the set-up of priorities, identification of opportunities and challenges of the economic climate in the Mediterranean.



c- Mediterranean Tourism Forum (MEDITOUR)

The Mediterranean Tourism Forum (MEDITOUR) is the result of a common ambition shared by all the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the ASCAME network to create and implement a program of international interest, addressing the core issues in the tourism sector. Its main objective is to enable Mediterranean professionals to discuss the challenges in the Mediterranean tourism and find common and constructive solutions for further sustainable growth of the Mediterranean Tourism Industry.

2014 and 2016 editions have been co-organized respectively by the CCIA-BML and the Chamber of Commerce of Mersin. Both editions have gathered high level representatives and tourism experts and addressed key issues such as future of the industry, the third age tourism, the challenge of competition versus cooperation, the tourism cultural heritage, the greening of the tourism industry and the launching of a Mediterranean Tourism Agency.



6. Initiatives and projects under the mandate of President Mohamed Choucair: towards regional development

a- Launching of the Faro in Lebanon in favor of the SMEs in the region

On 12 February 2013, a press conference was held in Beirut to announce the launch of the **Seed Capital, Development and Orientation Fund (FARO) in Lebanon**. This fund was launched on 27 May 2010 in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean in order to foster the development of the innovation in both sides of the region and, more especially, at the SMEs level. Under the initiative of President Mohamed Choucair, this fund has been adapted to the Chamber of Commerce of Beirut and Mount-Lebanon and was proposed as a model for the other chambers, members of ASCAME.





b- Creation of an assistance plan for the Lebanese SME and the Credit Guarantee Funds

On 11 September 2012, in Beirut, President Mohamed Choucair met with the Vice-President of the EIB, Mr. Philippe de Fontaine Vive. They have agreed to work together for the creation of the SMEs assistance program. The creation of the CREDIT GUARANTEE FUND in the framework of the Lebanese Chambers of Commerce was also announced in order to support the internationalization of the SMEs'. During the ASCAME Executive Committee which took place on 21st September 2012, it has been proposed to adapt this credit to all the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry in order to help them become more attractive and enable them to intensify the export services.





c- The Euro-Mediterranean cooperation projects in favor of the Mediterranean

Under the mandate of President Choucair, the relations and interactions between the members have intensified, especially thanks to the implementation of new cooperation projects of common interest.

The members of ASCAME have been involved in a total of 23 projects, co-financed by the European Union (EU), with a budget of approximately **54 million of euros**.

Some of the main topics explored in the frame of Euro-Mediterranean projects:

- ▷ Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Tourism (UMAYYAD, GOALS)
- ▷ Investment promotion in the Euro-Mediterranean region (EUROMED Invest)
- ▷ Solar technology (FOSTER in MED, SHAAMS, STS MED, FIREMED GR.ENE.CO)
- ▷ Waste treatment and recycling (GMI, MED- 3r)
- ▷ Local clusters of agro-enterprises (LACTIMED)
- ▷ Traditional foodstuff (E.H.P.P.C. - Med, SLOWMED y MedDiet)
- ▷ Textile industry (SUSTEXNET TEX-MED)
- ▷ Intergeneration learning (PRIME)
- ▷ Diasporas (MedGeneration)
- ▷ Local economic development (EDILE)
- ▷ Logistics (OPTIMED)
- ▷ Employment creation and mobility (EGREJOB MED-MOBIL)
- ▷ Blue growth (InnoBlueGrowth)

Among the member countries of ASCAME participating in these projects are: Italy, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, Algeria, Lebanon, Jordan, Tunisia, France, Greece, Cyprus, Croatia and Spain.



d- Touristic program of the Phoenician's Route

The collaboration initiated with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has led to a stronger commitment from ASCAME to ***The Phoenician's Route Cultural Tourism Programme***.

The Initiative was incorporated into the programme of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in 2003 as an international route crossing three continents, 18 Mediterranean countries and more than 80 towns.

President Choucair participated in the 2nd meeting of the Working Group on the Phoenician's Route on 30 May 2016 in Beirut. The event was attended by the Ministries of Tourism of Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt and international organizations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe.



7. Mohamed Choucair In the news : Gaining space in the regional and international media

During the second mandate of Mr. Choucair, ASCAME has had a **clear objective to expand and consolidate its visibility on local, regional and international media**. In an effort to increase visibility and impact of ASCAME activities and its role in the region, the Association has engaged in various strategic media such as:

Media coverage:



ASCAME has **annually** delivered **over 200 press releases** about ASCAME events, projects' outputs and institutional statements. **More than 800 ASCAME related articles** are estimated to have been published on media every year. Below some examples of this coverage on press and TV channels:



"Logistics? No one is on a pedestal anymore"

Mohamed Choucair, the president of ASCAME, takes stock of SIL Barcelona

by STEFANO PAMPURO, Barcelona

IN JUNE the most important commercial cost for carriers, which more exhibitors. Furthermore we



MEDITERRANEO CON VOCACIÓN GLOBAL

El encuentro a Los líderes económicos del Mediterráneo, reunidos en Barcelona, apostaron por hacer de la zona una gran plataforma económica mundial que pueda competir a escala global. El

encuentro estuvo organizado por la Asociación de Cámaras de Comercio del Mediterráneo (Asocamer) y la Cámara de Barcelona y contó con el apoyo de la Unión por el Mediterráneo.



VALOR AFEGIT

TOTS ELS VÍDEOS WEB DEL PROGRAMA

Valor afegit - 16/12/2015

16/12/2015 f t e g+ in + 8

inversió arabs: més enllà dels negocis? L'etac d'Estat Islàmic al cor d'Europa d'ara fa un mes ha generat molta cosa a les monarquies del Golf i les inversions multimilionàries que

8. Recommendations

1. Countries and regions are increasingly committed to their cultural diversity, and this should not prevent economic convergence. The Union for the Mediterranean must become the engine of inclusive development.
2. The rapprochement of nations is achieved through the harmonization of policies first; there is a need for convergence at the level of economic and social policies. ASCAME and national chambers must promote this convergence.
3. Faced with deficits and their consequences, openness is seriously threatened. The only rational parade is in improving productivity that is unattainable outside a sound employment policy.
4. Unemployment insurance is an absolute necessity to stabilize the workforce, retain skilled workers, improve the employment index and draw as many people out of the vicious circle of poverty. This is the regal road to productivity.
5. The progress of the region requires a better economic adherence to Europe, which cannot be achieved in an unbalanced exchange that produces deficits and unemployment. Agreements must be negotiated in a joint formula to the benefit of all.
6. Progress also requires a more intensive exchange between the countries of the South, both in goods and services, where joint conditions are easier to achieve. Chambers must advise their governments in negotiating agreements for this purpose.
7. The public-private partnership must be encouraged everywhere, without frontiers. It must give rise to consortia that generate infrastructures and tools for the diffusion of technical progress.

9. ASCAME and its organization



ASCAME is the **Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry**. It is an international organization with global scope and non-profit organization.

ASCAME was created in 1982 as an initiative from the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Barcelona and other Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce.

ASCAME represents:

- A. More than 300 Chambers of Commerce and other organizations sharing the same objectives like ASCAME such as Ports, Trade Fairs, Investment Promotion Agencies, Business Associations etc... from the two shores of the Mediterranean.
- B. More than 250 cities over the Mediterranean.
- C. The most important actor representing the interests of the chambers of commerce and the private sector of the Mediterranean.

ASCAME gathers presidents, vice-presidents and managing directors from chambers of commerce and other organizations.

The objectives of ASCAME are:

- To promote and investigate complementarities between the different economies of the Mediterranean countries.
- To establish a network of chambers of commerce and entities in charge of cooperation and economic exchanges between the countries of the Mediterranean region.
- To contribute to the creation of a wide space for peace, tolerance, security and prosperity.
- To create operational networks between similar institutions with the objective of promoting international cooperation through specific actions or joint studies.
- To reinforce a Mediterranean identity.
- ASCAME has an important role in international cooperation between the chambers of commerce. The association has a privileged position as representative of the private sector in the region.

At the operational level, ASCAME counts on various working commissions that represent the



heart of the Association and the idea labs for proposals and programs aimed at ensuring the economic development of the Mediterranean.

The ASCAME General Secretariat is the point of contact for all ASCAME members, committees and task forces, and is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the Association. It is supported by a department of Communication and Events, a department of Institutional and International Relations, a department of Cooperation Projects and a Department of Finance.





Casa Llotja de Mar, Headquarter of the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce (ASCAME General Secretariat).



10. Decorations awarded during the mandate



Mohamed Choucair receiving the decoration of the National Order of Merit – Grade Knight – by the Ambassador of France in Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Patrice Paoli, on 16 November 2012, in Beirut

Mohamed Choucair receiving the decoration of the Lebanese Order of Merit – First Grade – by the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Fouad Sanioura, on 19 May 2014, in Beirut





*Mohamed Choucair
receiving the decoration of
the Order of Merit – Grade
Officer- by the Ambassador
of Italy in Lebanon, H.E. Mr.
Giuseppe Morabito, on 18
February 2015, in Beirut*



*Mohamed Choucair
receiving the decoration
of the Order of Friendship
of the Russian Federation
by the Ambassador of
Russia in Lebanon, H.E. Mr.
Alexander Zasyrkin, on 9
December 2016, in Beirut*



This mandate would not have completed all these achievements without the careful consideration of Spain and especially the city of Barcelona that hosts ASCAME.

I keep preciously the decoration of Spain that was delivered to me by Her Excellency the Spanish Ambassador to Lebanon, Mrs. Milagros Hernando Echevarría, who passed away recently and whose memory will always be very dear to me.



Mohamed Choucair receiving the decoration of the Cross in the Order of Civil Merit – Grade Officer – by the Ambassador of Spain in Lebanon, H.E. Mrs. Milagros Hernando Echevarría, on 15 March 2017, in Beirut



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ASCAME

ASSOCIATION DES CHAMBRES DE COMMERCE ET D'INDUSTRIE DE LA MEDITERRANEE

ASSOCIATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

جمعية غرف التجارة والصناعة للبحر الأبيض المتوسط