MEDIA RELEASE

SBF Launches Singapore Enterprise Centre in Dubai, the First in the Middle East, to Support Singapore Business Ventures in the Region

SEC@Dubai serves as a gateway into opportunities in sectors like food, retail, infrastructure and trade across the Middle East

Wednesday, 19 November 2025 [Singapore]

The Singapore Business Federation (SBF) today launched its fifth Singapore Enterprise Centre (SEC) – and its first in the Middle East – in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). This marks another significant milestone in expanding its global network to support Singapore companies grow in overseas market.

2. The launch follows the opening of SEC@Bengaluru last week, underscoring the rapid expansion of SBF's global network to support Singapore businesses. Under the GlobalConnect@SBF initiative by Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG) and SBF, the Centres provide in-market advisory, networking, and business matching support.[1]

3. The launch was officiated by Minister for Manpower and Minister-in-charge of Energy and Science & Technology, Singapore, Dr Tan See Leng and graced by Chairman of Dubai Chambers, His Excellency Eng. Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansoori, Singapore's Ambassador to the UAE, His Excellency Kamal R. Vaswani, and SBF Chairman, Mr S. S. Teo, alongside senior representatives from Singapore and UAE business communities, industry partners, and government agencies.

Equipping Singapore Businesses to Tap High-Growth Gulf Opportunities

4. The UAE is a key market in the Gulf region with an economy valued at US$569 billion, and projected to grow by 4.8% in 2025. By the end of the decade, UAE aims to double its GDP to over US$800 billion by strengthening its role as a global hub for business and finance while actively pursuing new bilateral trade deals and partnerships. The country is also an important trading partner for Singapore with bilateral merchandise trade reaching S$24 billion in 2024, indicating the commercial scale and momentum of the economic ties between the two nations.

5. With its excellent infrastructure, transportation links, and business friendly environment, UAE also serve as a regional launchpad for Singapore firms targeting the Middle East markets such as Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Jordan, and Qatar. In SBF's National Business Survey (NBS) 2024 – Scaled Internationally Edition, the proportion of Singapore businesses indicating future overseas expansion plans for the UAE and Saudi Arabia increased by 7 percentage-point and 6 percentage-point, respectively.

6. Growth opportunities in the KSA include participation in multi-sector initiatives aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 and the upcoming World Cup 2034 – particularly in areas such as

[1] *GlobalConnect@SBF currently operates four other SECs in Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, and Bengaluru*

urban infrastructure, healthcare, education, and the implementation of AI-enabled technology solutions.

7. Jordan serves as a strategic hub for regional and global business operations, offering a robust workforce ideal for establishing IT infrastructure and human capital development. In Qatar, businesses can tap into expanding sectors such as technology and digital transformation, healthcare services, and education, leveraging ongoing investments and the nation's drive towards modernisation and innovation.

8. Reflecting the rising interest, SBF's engagements in the Middle East have also grown significantly in the past two years. Notably, companies that enquired to set base in the region have surged more than fivefold during the same period. This strong momentum demonstrates growing confidence in key markets in the region, especially in the UAE and KSA, reinforcing the need for a dedicated in-market presence of SBF through SEC@Dubai.

9. Together with partners including Virtuzone, Olam Global Agri, and HSBC, SEC@Dubai will support Singapore businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through its market advisory programmes, workshops, roundtables, and seminars.

10. In conjunction with the opening, SBF led the KSA–UAE Overseas Market Workshop (OMW) - a business mission comprising 18 delegates from 13 companies across seven sectors, including manufacturing, engineering and construction, tech, and real estate. The 3-day workshop provided a structured, end-to-end approach to market entry, connecting participants with key policy agencies and leading enterprises that enable the region's business ecosystem and technology integration. Participants also engaged with top FMCG distributors to understand practical distribution models, localisation strategies, and regional trade routes.

11. Kok Ping Soon, Chief Executive Officer of SBF said, "The UAE is one of Singapore's top trading partners in the Middle East, and both countries share long-standing cooperation in areas such as innovation, sustainability, and technology. In the past two years, we have seen a steady rise in business enquiries, engagement initiatives, and facilitated projects across the Middle East. This growing demand reflects the strong receptiveness of Singapore enterprises to opportunities in the market, and positions Dubai as a natural landing point in the region. The launch of SEC@Dubai marks a new chapter in SBF's internationalisation journey and underscores Singapore's strong commitment to deepening trade and investment ties with the UAE and the wider Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region."

12. Tan Soon Kim, Deputy Managing Director, Markets, EnterpriseSG said, "We are delighted to partner SBF in supporting the growth of Singapore enterprises in the UAE and wider Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. As a dynamic and rapidly evolving economic hub, the region offers compelling opportunities across a broad spectrum of industries, including urban solutions, infrastructure, energy, logistics, technology, and consumer goods. The SEC@Dubai aligns with Enterprise Singapore's ongoing efforts to strengthen economic ties and create pathways for sustainable, mutually beneficial growth in the Middle East."

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About Singapore Business Federation (新加坡工商联合总会)

Singapore Business Federation (SBF) is the apex business chamber with over 32,000 members across diverse industries. With a vision to advance Singapore towards a globally competitive and sustainable economy, SBF mobilises the business community to be future-ready and magnify transformation opportunities through policy advocacy, partnership platforms and capability programmes.

For more information, please visit: www.sbf.org.sg

About GlobalConnect@SBF (**迈向国际**@新加坡工商联合总会)

GlobalConnect@SBF is an initiative by Enterprise Singapore and the Singapore Business Federation (SBF) to help businesses expand globally. GlobalConnect@SBF supports companies' expansion into new markets through market advisory and in-market assistance, networking opportunities, business matching and overseas workshops. GlobalConnect@SBF's suite of services also include FTA education and advisory, market insights and research.

For more information, please visit: www.globalconnect.sbf.org.sg