

NEWSLETTER



A Message from BLCC Chairman

When we launched the British Lebanese Chamber of Commerce in January, it was at an opportune time and a critical juncture for the region, for Lebanon, and for the role of cross-border institutions in sustaining economic continuity and confidence. The developments that have unfolded since have further cemented our belief in BLCC's remit to build a strategic bridge between the UK and Lebanon on institutional credibility, global governance, entrepreneurial momentum, and economic partnership – with cross-border impact far beyond the two markets. It is in this context that we have set our mission in motion over the past few months.

The following pages mark the beginning of the Chamber's journey and set the tone for what follows. The bridge we are building is grounded in partnership, dialogue, and long-term perspective, particularly at a time when clarity is often in short supply.

In this direction, BLCC is already moving with purpose, and with our four pillars – trade and investment facilitation, institutional dialogue, knowledge and capability building, and diaspora and global reach – at the centre of our engagement and outreach.

The launch of BLCC, which we were pleased to hold at the residence of British Ambassador Hamish Cowell, signaled a clear alignment between diplomatic and business communities. Early engagements, from our meetings with key stakeholders to our participation in forums such as the Cedars Conference 2026 in London, have reinforced the value of sustained, structured interaction between Lebanon, its diaspora, and international partners.

Equally important has been our collaboration with the UK's Diplomatic Advisory Hub, where discussions have focused on the practical implications of operating in today's complex environment. Far from abstract, topics such as regional conflict, supply chain disruption, and market volatility are immediate considerations for businesses on both sides. Creating a space where these issues can be addressed with clarity, context, and shared perspective is central to BLCC's mandate.

These early steps have not only confirmed the strength of our direction, but have also sharpened our focus. Our priority remains to connect networks meaningfully, support sound decision-making, and contribute to a more stable and forward-looking economic relationship between the UK and Lebanon. And our ambition is to build an institution that is steady in times of uncertainty, anchored in confidence, and consistent in its long-term contribution.

We have been entrusted with a great responsibility, and we will carry it forward with discipline, focus, and purpose.

BLCC Launch Reception at HMA Residence



On Tuesday 27 January 2026, British Ambassador Hamish Cowell, launched the British Lebanese Chamber of Commerce (BLCC) during a reception held at his residence. The BLCC marks a significant milestone in business and trade ties between Lebanon and the UK.

The launch event was attended by the BLCC board members, Minister of Economy and Trade Amer Bisat, Lebanese business leaders, entrepreneurs, and future potential members.

The BLCC is an official non-profit organisation and will become a proud member of the British Chambers of Commerce International Network, which spans over 75 chambers worldwide.

Supported by the British Embassy in Beirut, the BLCC aims to serve as a strategic bridge between British and Lebanese business communities facilitating partnerships, providing market insights, and advocating for the shared interests of its members.

Its mission is to promote bilateral trade and investment, support businesses seeking to expand across both markets, and foster a trusted network that encourages collaboration, innovation, and sustainable growth.

British Ambassador and Honorary President of the BLCC Hamish Cowell said:

“The launch of the British Lebanese Chamber of Commerce represents a vital step in strengthening commercial partnerships between the UK and Lebanon and creating new opportunities for businesses in both countries.”

Farid Chedid, Chairman of the BLCC said:

“The role of the Chamber is to act as a strategic bridge anchoring Lebanese enterprise to British standards, while enabling British businesses to engage Lebanon with clarity, prudence, and long-term vision.”

Amer Bisat, Minister of Economy and Trade said:

“The British Lebanese Chamber of Commerce will be the platform to increase exports and investment between our two countries, and an important part of our transition as an economy and a country moving from recovery into global prosperity.”

The BLCC invites Lebanese and British businesses to join its growing network and take advantage of the resources, advocacy, and connectivity it offers.



Meeting with Lord Ashcroft

The BLCC team, along with the Chairman of the board Farid Chedid, the Treasurer Emile Chaoui, and the honorary board member, lawyer Nadim Abboud, met with Lord Michel Ashcroft during his visit to Lebanon in February to explore the market and assess potential investment opportunities.

During the meeting, the team provided an overview of Lebanon’s current landscape, highlighting both the challenges and the areas that are functioning effectively. They also outlined the country’s key strengths, particularly within the private sector, and discussed where opportunities for growth and investment may lie.

On March 17 The Diplomatic Advisory Hub – a joint initiative between the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the British Chambers of Commerce –hosted a webinar on “What the Middle East conflict means for your business” aimed at firms that already export to the Middle East, or are considering entering the market.

This session was designed for all businesses, especially export-facing companies and risk professionals, who need practical guidance.

Speakers were: His Majesty’s Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain Alastair Long, Lieutenant General Sir Simon Mayall, the Department for Business and Trade’s Director of Business Intelligence and Engagement Alexander Vanbesouw, and the Joint Head of the UK Government’s International Energy Unit Sophia Brecknell.



The discussion focused on the military and economic implications of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, particularly the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which has reduced shipping by 98% and led to a 43% increase in Brent crude prices to nearly \$104 per barrel. The panel highlighted the resilience of Gulf countries, with Bahrain and UAE experiencing minimal damage despite numerous attacks. The UK’s response includes supporting businesses and providing emergency travel documents. The conversation also touched on the potential for political solutions and the importance of de-escalation to stabilize global energy markets.



On April 16, the Diplomatic Advisory Hub hosted another webinar titled “Managing Business Continuity Amid Uncertainty in the Middle East.” The session brought together speakers from both the diplomatic and business communities, including representatives from Goyder, Maersk Line, Limited, and KPMG.

The event discussed the increased pressure and risks on shipping due to the blockade of Iranian ports, with Iran threatening to escalate risks in the Sea of Oman and Strait of Hormuz. Despite this, there are signs of progress with Pakistan’s regional travel and open discussions about extending the ceasefire.

The impact on Gulf countries varies, with Saudi Arabia relatively unaffected while others face significant challenges. Supply chain disruptions include aluminum shortages, helium scarcity for semiconductors, and fertilizer shortages affecting global yields. Practical tips for SMEs include financial modeling, contract reviews, and leveraging trade associations.

The discussion also focused on the impact of rising costs and labor disruptions in the Middle East construction sector, exacerbated by energy costs for smelting. The GCC is actively pursuing free trade agreements, including with South Korea and India, despite ongoing UK negotiations facing political trade-offs. The UK government emphasized its commitment to supporting UK businesses, particularly in defense, infrastructure, and energy sectors. The panel also addressed the resilience of supply chains, the importance of business continuity planning, and the potential for land bridge options to bypass the Strait of Hormuz. The session concluded with a call for continued diplomatic efforts to ensure regional stability.



Farid Chedid
Chairman

*Chairman and Group
CEO of Chedid Capital*



Rajab Jubaili
Vice Chairman

*Executive Chairman & Founder
of Jubaili Agrotec Group*



Amin Makarem
Secretary

*CEO & Managing Director
of the International School of London
Group*



Emile Chaoui
Treasurer

*Managing Partner at
Omnipharma & Omnilab*



Ziad Kanaan
Board Member

*Owner of
Portia Management*



Mustapha Madi
Board Member

*Partner at Sidara & Director
at Dar and Ui*



Hani Sheet
Board Member

Chairman of DIA SARL



Joumana Saddi Chaya
Board Member

Managing Partner at PSLAB



Nadim Tewtel
Board Member

*Managing Director
at Tewtel Group*

Meet the Honorary Board Members



**His Majesty's Ambassador to
Lebanon Hamish Cowell CMG
Honorary Chairman of BLCC**

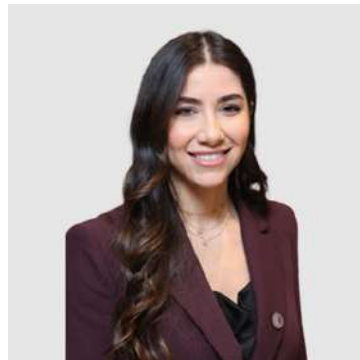


**Nadim Abboud OBE
Honorary Board Member**
*Managing Partner at
Abboud Law and Associates*

Meet the BLCC Executive Team



**Yasmine El Hajj
Chief Executive Officer**



**Diala Michlawi
Director of Operations**

If you are interested in joining the British Lebanese Chamber of Commerce (BLCC), we invite you to visit our website at www.blcc.org.lb and complete the membership application form. A member of our team will be in touch with you shortly.

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