



*IOM's quarterly
communication with
expatriate groups from MENA*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 **Diaspora Engagement Project: MEDMA2: Mobilizing Moroccan expatriates in Belgium for economic development in Morocco**
- 2 **Highlighting an Expatriate Group: Tunisian American Young Professionals (TAYP) works to build a new Tunisia from abroad**
- 3 **Highlighting Successful Expats: Former footballer Zouhair Essikal talks sports and navigating multiple cultures**

MEDMA2 – ENGAGING MOROCCAN EXPATRIATES IN BELGIUM FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN MOROCCO

IOM Morocco and its partners held a final conference for the project “Mobilization of Moroccans residing in Belgium for the development of Morocco” (MEDMA2) in Rabat last week. IOM’s Director General, William Lacy Swing attended, along with representatives of implementing partners.

Financed by the Belgian Cooperation, MEDMA2 is a pilot project implemented by IOM to explore how, through its investments, the Moroccan diaspora can play a positive role in the development of their country of origin. During the three year implementation of the project, the different partners of MEDMA2 have accompanied and guided select individuals who wished to invest in various areas such as health, services, tourism and logistics. The project has focused on three regions of Morocco: Tangier/Tetouan, Taza/Al Hoceima/Taounate and the Oriental, where the majority of Moroccans residing in Belgium are from.

In his opening remarks, Director General Swing noted the importance of creating appropriate mechanisms to enable members of the diaspora to contribute to the development of their country of origin, and to share their resources and expertise. He

emphasized that “their contributions are not only financial but they also include their knowledge and skills, their experiences, their networks and their relations.”

Furthermore, the Director General complimented the continuous efforts of the Moroccan government to recognize the role of its nationals abroad, in particular, their skills and resources. Moroccans residing outside of the country display “high strategic potential” for the development of Morocco, especially through their remitting power, as they contribute up to 7 per cent to the Moroccan GDP.

This project, aimed at the mobilization of Moroccan skills and expertise found in Belgium, is a “first experience” that should serve as a model in other countries, indicated the Minister in Charge of Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs.

The conference brought together over 60 participants representing national institutions, Moroccan civil society, the United Nations and diplomatic corps accredited in Morocco, researchers, representatives of the targeted regions of the project, as well as the eleven selected

individuals.

An external evaluation of the project carried out by the Universities of Antwerp and Oujda, and the resulting recommendations were presented to the public. Moreover, the conference allowed participants to discuss in general terms the subject of investments and finally to highlight the key role of the Moroccan diaspora in the development of the country.

For more information, contact:

Christos Christodoulides at
cchristodoulides@iom.int



IOM Director General William Swing meets with representatives of implementing partners: the Minister in Charge of Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs, Anis Birrou; the Belgian Ambassador in Morocco, Frank Carruet; and the General Treasurer of the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad, Abdessalam El Ftouh. ©IOM 2015

WHAT'S NEW AT IOM

- In June, IOM published its strategy for addressing the Mediterranean crisis: [Addressing Complex Migration Flows in the Mediterranean](#) – IOM Response Plan. The plan outlines the priorities of IOM offices along the Mediterranean migration routes and provides an illustration of the key migration dynamics facing these regions.
- In June, IOM launched a major research project focused on the labour recruitment industry between India, Nepal, and UAE. A kick-off meeting was held with the project partners, Zayed University, Indian Institute of Management – Ahmedabad, and the UAE Ministry of Labour, in Abu Dhabi on June 1st and 2nd. The eleven-month research project is funded by the UAE Ministry of Labour.
- From July 6-9, IOM Iraq implemented a four-day advanced workshop on diaspora engagement, and was attended by officials from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Migration & Displacement, Higher Education, Planning, and Labour & Social Affairs. The aim of the workshop was to build capacity and provide concrete examples of strategies governments have put in place to effectively engage with their diaspora communities.



SUBMIT TO THE NEXT ISSUE

We want to hear from you! Submissions accepted for the following sections:

*Highlighting a Diaspora Group
Notable Project
Expatriate Success Story
Announcements*

The next newsletter will be released at the end of October. For information and submissions, e-mail iommenanews@iom.int.

TUNISIAN AMERICAN PROFESSIONALS
HELP SHAPE NEW TUNISIA

The [Tunisian American Young Professionals \(TAYP\)](#) is a non-profit, non-political, professional organization that represents over 1,000 Tunisian American professionals in the United States. TAYP's creation was inspired by the January 2011 events, led by the youth of Tunisia, to transition the country into a real democratic state. TAYP was born with the belief that economic prosperity is a key ingredient to ensure the successful transition to a new Tunisia.

TAYP aims at increasing the effectiveness of economic and investment flows between the US and Tunisia, and creating a networking platform for Tunisians who live (or lived) in the United States to help each other professionally.

Through its role as facilitator and advisor between pools of funding, Tunisian entrepreneurs, and US investors, TAYP has and continues to:

- Encourage US investors to consider Tunisia through presentations and roundtables at chambers of commerce, think tanks, and professional associations
- Condition the environment for increased US interest in Tunisia, with US agencies, Congress, and the Executive Branch
- Raise the awareness of Tunisia's entrepreneurs regarding partnerships with US investors and agencies
- Support young entrepreneurs in developing their businesses through mentoring, technical and financial support

Through its 4 "E" model (Education, Entrepreneurship, Exchange, Export) TAYP promotes the US economic value proposition in Tunisia and leveraging its natural differentiators.

Among the many projects that TAYP

initiated is the [Handicraft Export Program](#), originally sponsored by US Embassy in Tunis, has been well received by U.S. consumers and generated significant additional revenues for artisans, with back order volumes of over \$500,000. Additionally, this program has maintained 300 jobs and over 50 direct jobs were created, and generated a significant economic impact in 17 regions in Tunisia.

TAYP is currently establishing a Handicraft Collection Center in Tunis to collect, package, and label products for export. Handicraft products will be sent to a fulfillment center in Memphis, Tennessee, which will manage large and small orders and ship the handicrafts more cost-efficiently. In addition, the artisans will continue to participate in handicraft fairs in Tunis and the United States to give them the opportunity to present products, develop economic ties, and strengthen their business acumen.

As TAYP continues to focus on its 4 E's initiative, it will delve deeper into the current Tunisian export apparatus and create a cost-effective, long-term tool to solidify the future of the Tunisian handicraft sector.

TAYP efforts and projects were recognized by several organizations. The Handicraft Export project was highlighted at the Clinton Global Initiative's Middle East and Africa meeting in Morocco and the World Fair Trade Organization Annual Conference in Milan Italy May, 2015.

For more information, contact:

Anis Mnif at anis.mnif@tayp.org



TAYP sponsored booth at the Handicraft Trade Show in New York, February 2014.

PLAYING FOOTBALL, BUILDING TIES



Moroccan-Belgian Zouhair Essikal is a former semi-professional football player. He is currently pursuing an MBA at the University of Warwick, and is an IT manager for the European Commission.

What is your link to the Moroccan expatriate community?

My family are from Asilah, a small village in the north west of Morocco. My father, who is car mechanic, arrived in Belgium with his boss to buy a car in 1974 and decided to stay here. He married my mother in 1977, and she joined him in Brussels. Except for two cousins, all my family is still in Morocco. Since I was young, I have returned every year to spend two months in Asilah. This was important as it allowed me to stay connected to my Moroccan roots and understand the Moroccan culture.

What was your trajectory for success?

I started to play football when I was 8 years old. First I played only in my neighbourhood. My father decided to put me in an official team. I later played for a team called "Etoile Marocaine" which was a regional football team created by the Moroccan community. I played there two years before being signed to a first division football team when I was seventeen.

What impact has football had on your connection to Europe? To Morocco?

Football helped me to find my place in the Belgian community. When I started to play, the team was a place where different cultures were mixed; there were Belgian players as well as Congolese, Turks and Italians. The

football pitch was often a place where you could find people from the different waves of immigration that Belgium has experienced. It taught me from a very young age that we are living in a multi-cultural community and that you do not stick to one culture—you can be Belgian *and* Moroccan.

How do you engage with the Arab region/Morocco? Do you have any plans for future engagement?

When I was around 30, I signed back with "Etoile Marocain" where I had a special role in this team. I was captain but also a mentor for the young, mostly Moroccan players. I tried to help them to understand their place in the community, how they should behave, to avoid the temptations of the criminality and so on. Those young people have plenty of potential, but unfortunately lack of guidance and often fall into the trap of poverty.

After completing my MBA next year, I look for opportunities in the Middle Eastern markets. Indeed, by being fluent in two cultures, I can bring an added value to international companies which are working on European and Arabic markets. My understanding of both worlds will definitely help me in such challenges.

How do you see the Moroccan expatriate community contributing to Morocco's development?

Morocco has long understood that the second generation of expatriate Moroccans is a valuable asset for the country. They launched different campaigns to bring back those qualified people in order to boost Moroccan companies. I think that this is really a brilliant idea. Morocco needs them and they often want to come back and bring an added value to their homeland.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Maghrib Entrepreneurs:

Are you a Moroccan living in France? Do you have a new business start-up in Morocco? If yes, you can benefit from a free and personalized training in France and Morocco.

Maghrib Entrepreneurs offers trainings in new business start-ups for the Moroccan Diaspora living in France, coordinated by ACIM (Agence pour la Coopération Internationale et le développement locale en Méditerranée) and financed by the Ministry of Moroccans Living Abroad (with the support of the Agence Française de Développement [AFD]).

Deadline for submission:
December 31, 2015

Further information:
veronique.manry@agenceacim.com
www.entreprendre-mediterranee.com

TWENSA Invest:

Are you Tunisian and living in France, Switzerland or Germany? Do you have a project or new business start-up in Tunisia? You can benefit from a free and personalized training in Tunisia.

TWENSA Invest offers training in new business start-ups for the Tunisian Diaspora living in Europe, coordinated by ACIM and the Tunisian Ministry of Industry, and financed by the Swiss Cooperation.

Deadline for submission:
September 30, 2015

Further information:
veronique.manry@agenceacim.com
www.entreprendre-mediterranee.com

Seminar on Diaspora Mobilization:

In the framework of the EU-funded MedGeneration project, ANIMA and the Chamber of Commerce of Beirut Mount Lebanon will be organizing a two-day seminar on diaspora mobilization. The seminar will bring together NGOs, International Organizations, government officials, private sector, and diaspora associations from across the globe to exchange ideas and information on innovative new initiatives in the field of Migration & Development.

Date:
September 16-17, 2015

Further information:
expertmedgeneration@ccib.org.lb

Training on International Migration and Development:

IOM Egypt, in close coordination with the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, is organizing a 3 day training on Migration and Development. This training will bring together governmental officials and representatives of Egyptians abroad to discuss the nexus between migration and development, and provide a better understanding of policies and practices regarding the connections between human mobility and development processes.

Further information:
pfanti@iom.int