

Inaugural Insurance Taskforce on Corporate Governance meets in Dubai

Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance (Hawkamah) and The Arab Forum of Insurance Regulatory Commissions (AFIRC) yesterday held the first ever Insurance Taskforce on Corporate Governance meeting in Dubai. The half-day event brought together insurance regulators, industry representatives and insurance experts from selected MENA countries, and of the Financial Services Volunteer Corp to discuss the results of a MENA wide survey on corporate governance practices and prepare recommendations for corporate governance policy modernization and reform in the region's insurance industry.

The goal of the meeting was to assess the frameworks and practices of the insurance firms in the region, identify corporate governance weaknesses and discuss a policy brief containing guidelines and recommendations to ensure that governance of insurers is in conformance with international best practice and adequately protects policyholders and other stakeholders.

Dr Nasser Saidi, Executive Director of Hawkamah said: "The region's emerging insurance and reinsurance industry, including Takaful and Re-Takaful, is rapidly growing, highlighting the need for good corporate governance practices to ensure financial soundness and stability, and strengthen the performance of companies by enhancing both corporate accountability and improving transparency. The Hawkamah-AFIRC Insurance Taskforce on Corporate Governance is a public-private partnership aiming to develop and harmonise corporate governance frameworks and practices across the region. The meeting provided an invaluable opportunity for regulators, the insurance industry and experts to share and discuss their views and opinions on a Policy Brief that develops

recommendations to strengthen and improve corporate governance modernisation & reform in the MENA insurance sector.”

Dr. Bassel Hindawi, Chairman of AFIRC said: “The region’s insurance industry is currently experiencing a period of rapid growth and development and this growth looks set to continue. AFIRC is committed to ensuring the creation of a well-governed, well-regulated and well-supervised regional insurance and reinsurance industry. In this respect, Corporate Governance is of major significance to the insurance industry and constitutes a key element in the success of economic reforms, whereby it enhances confidence in the economy, protects investors, and happens to be a prompt response to the accelerating developments in world economies”.

The Insurance Taskforce on Corporate Governance follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between AFIRC and Hawkamah to co-operate to promote and improve corporate governance practices for the insurance industry in the Arab world.

AFIRC is a regional Forum of Insurance Commissions in the Arab World. The establishment of the Arab Forum of Insurance Regulatory Commissions (AFIRC) came as a prompt response to the accelerating developments in the regional insurance industry, and the challenges which face the Arab Insurance Industry. As part of its mandate, AFIRC aims to enhance cooperation among its members in order to regulate and develop the insurance businesses in the Arab World. The membership of the forum, include 15 Arab Countries namely, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen

The Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance is an international association of corporate governance practitioners, regulators and institutions whose primary mandate is to develop corporate governance best practices in the Middle East region. By promoting the core values of transparency, accountability, fairness, disclosure and responsibility, Hawkamah assists countries and companies in

the region to develop and implement sound and globally integrated corporate governance frameworks.