

Keynote interview at the AVCJ Private Equity Forum Abu Dhabi 2025, 11 Feb 2025

Dr. Saidi discussed the current global economic conditions and the implications for private equity investment strategies in the Middle East in this keynote interview.

The interview can be accessed via this [link](#)

The main points of discussion were as below:

1. The geo-political landscape is changing. Important to understand the big shift in economic activity towards Asia (particularly, China)
2. Trump & his Maganomics policies (including tariffs) can play to the benefit of the GCC: China can divert their trade away from the US to this region; GCC can emerge as “Middle Powers” & GCC can use this as an opportunity to shape MENA region into an interlinked trade and investment hub. Start thinking of trade in infrastructure services.
3. GCC countries have matured very quickly in the past 15 years. A trend of regionalised globalisation, driving regional integration.
4. Need to support the increased trade & investment with Asia with banking, financial & payments links: use of renminbi to settle trade transactions, digital payments, the mBridge cross-border CBDC platform
5. GCC SWFs are growing their domestic role, but will pivot towards Asia
6. GCC are emerging as Global Old & New Energy & Climate Tech hubs. Middle East dominates crude oil exports and are increasing investments in renewables & climate tech.
7. Opportunities in sectors: Tech (AI, data centres,

robotics but all customised to the needs of the region), renewables (no reason you cannot export solar-based electricity to India or Europe), demographics related (health, education), e-mobility (EVs, e-transport systems), electrification of existing infrastructure.