



The U.S. Chamber Partners with AmCham Libya to Expand Commercial Investment in Libya

We continue to monitor, with great interest, developments in Libya as the country continues its transition to democracy, greater rule of law, and a new system of governance. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce remains committed to a meaningful U.S.-Libya commercial relationship as an important force for economic growth and prosperity in Libya and the wider MENA region.

We are working in close partnership with the newly reconstituted American Chamber of Commerce in Libya (AmCham Libya), which from its own discussions with key Libyan authorities, has identified a vast range of opportunities for American companies to do business in Libya. Richard Griffiths, president of AmCham Libya, says that he has seen a dramatic uptick in commercial activity in Libya and that the country's authorities are very interested in courting more private sector investment.

Griffiths believes that there is a strong need for defense and civil support, both of which would be well-funded by the Libyan government, ranging from land and air vehicles to border and customs patrol. Security continues to be a focal point for this new government in its efforts to provide greater stability throughout the country.

The Libyan government, according to Griffiths, is pro-active in sourcing the best suppliers for military and civil protection and technology, yet it regularly fails to provide traditional tendering processes that western companies are accustomed to, often creating a disconnect between the government's needs and companies' ability to satisfy those needs. Griffiths and his team are working with the relevant ministries to help educate them on what American companies are looking for and how to improve these processes.

The Libyan government is also developing plans to build a more modern infrastructure that will cement a firm foundation for further growth and development in the nation. Various ministries have identified a range of infrastructure and engineering needs—projects which today are usually undertaken by non-American firms—given that American companies do not have a long history of doing business in Libya and the Libyans aren't cognizant of America's private sector capabilities. In the health care sector, Griffiths says he has identified a desire to develop high-level critical care and triage centers in addition to the delivery of basic medical technology.

Clearly, Libya is not without its challenges and the market requires that significant changes be made to enable U.S. firms to compete. AmCham Libya is diligently working with the complete range of Libyan ministries to understand the country's business needs while promoting the need for a long-term investment plan, which includes training Libyan citizens in skilled professions and diversification from the energy sector. The eventual goal of AmCham Libya is to facilitate meaningful, sustainable and diversified business exchanges between the United States and Libya. America has long been a preeminent world leader in the areas of corporate social responsibility, brand development and marketing, and we can use that experience to foster true economic growth for the people of Libya.