

# World Trade Centers Association's 55th Annual Global Business Forum to Convene in Marseille, France

Category: Business

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[World Trade Centers Association \(WTCA\)](#) – an international trade organization connecting more than 300 World Trade Center (WTC) locations in nearly 100 countries and territories – and [World Trade Center \(WTC\) Marseille Provence](#) will host the [55th annual WTCA Global Business Forum \(GBF\)](#) in Marseille, France from April 6-9.

The association's annual Forum assembles both WTCA members and their global networks, including leaders from business, government, academia, and international organizations. More than 300 attendees from more than 50 countries and territories have confirmed their participation. Currently, represented countries and territories include: Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China Mainland, Colombia, Cte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Gibraltar, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palestine, Panama, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Taiwan, Togo, Tunisia, Trkiye, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, Uruguay, Vietnam and Yemen.

The four-day event offers a range of programming, including "Strategies for Success in an Evolving Marketplace," "Free Trade Zones as Engines of Growth," and "Navigating Trade, Real Estate and Investment Trends in 2025." New this year, WTCA is

featuring a Real Estate Summit for attendees with specialized sessions on “World Trade Center Projects in Focus,” “Expanding the Real Estate Horizon: Innovation and Resilience in a Changing World,” “and “FDI Trends Reshaping Real Estate & Infrastructure.”

With the theme “**Gateway to the Mediterranean**“, this year’s Forum features an opening address from John E. Drew, Chair, WTCA Board of Directors; and Benoit Vincent, CEO of WTC Marseille Provence. Other notable speakers include: Angela Ellard, Deputy Director General of the World Trade Organization; Ken Levinson, CEO of the Washington International Trade Association (WITA); Penny Naas, Lead GMF Allied Strategic Competitiveness of the German Marshall Fund of the United States; Lionel Johnson, President of the Pacific Pension and Investment Institute; Lia RoCHAT, Founder of Archismart Energy; Philippe Veran, Co-Founder and President of Biotech Dental; Jacopo Dettoni, Editor of *fDi Intelligence/Financial Times*; Edward Grunwald, Partner and Sales Director of Revolugo; Daniel Tchenio, Director at CBRE Marseille; Amal Louis, Director of [Business Development and Intermodal Solutions](#) of the Grand Port Maritime de Marseille – Port de Marseille Fos; and Samir Hamrouni, CEO of the World Free Zones Organization.

*“WTCA remains committed to promoting free and fair trade, open markets, and healthy competition – principles that drive investment, prosperity and economic growth,”* said **John E. Drew, Chair, WTCA Board of Directors**. *Now more than ever, as [businesses](#) navigate shifting global trade policies and economic uncertainty, the annual WTCA Global Business Forum (GBF) provides a vital platform for members and their networks to connect, explore new markets, and gain critical insights. With an active and engaged B2B program supported by a robust matchmaking platform, this year’s GBF reinforces our commitment to fostering partnerships and expanding global opportunities.”*

Demonstrating the strength of the global WTCA network, the Forum facilitates direct business-to-business (B2B) relationships and investment opportunities across industry sectors including agriculture, architecture, banking and financial services, construction and building materials, consumer goods, food and beverage, freight and logistics, health technology, industrial solutions, manufacturing, maritime and energy services, and tourism.

This year's Forum features structured B2B matchmaking sessions, connecting attendees directly with companies and individuals who align with their specific [business](#) needs. In partnership with the International Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Internationale) Provence Alpes Cte d'Azur, the GBF B2B matchmaking platform becomes immediately available to attendees upon registration for the event.

Marseille was chosen for this year's event given its role as a critical European hub for trade, innovation, and economic activity. The Mediterranean region connects three continents and plays a vital role in global commerce, boasting strong industries in maritime trade, logistics, energy, tourism, and technology. Hosting the GBF in Marseille provides WTCA members and attending delegates with unparalleled access to this dynamic market, offering opportunities to explore investment prospects and engage with [leaders shaping](#) regional and global trade.

*"Our region has long been a crossroads of global trade, driving economic growth and fostering international collaboration. Between its strategic location, diverse industries and thriving innovation ecosystem, Marseille is the ideal setting for this year's Forum,"* said **Benoit Vincent, CEO, WTC Marseille Provence**. *"This event will create new opportunities for investment, trade, and partnership in one of the world's most dynamic economic regions."*

Last year's WTCA Global [Business](#) Forum was held in Bengaluru,

India, bringing together nearly 300 attendees from 36 countries and territories, including 105 WTC businesses. The [event marked the debut of the “Global Business Forum”](#) under its new name, formerly known as the WTCA General Assembly, and featured over 300 scheduled B2B meetings and the signing of 12 Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between WTCA members in various regions and with some local Indian business partners, strengthening global partnerships and expanding business opportunities worldwide.

