



WORLD ALLIANCE
of International Financial Centers

Newsletter April 2026

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VOICES



[Ahmet Ihsan Erdem](#) shares his insights on the evolving role of financial hubs in advancing sustainable finance—where public policy, private capital, and international cooperation converge. As global financial ecosystems transform amid sustainability and geopolitical shifts, [IFC](#) is positioning itself as a resilient bridge between Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia.

How do you see the role of financial centers evolving in driving sustainable finance agendas, particularly at the intersection of public policy, private capital, and international cooperation?

Financial centers are evolving beyond marketplaces into strategic platforms that channel capital towards sustainable outcomes. By aligning public policy, private capital, and international cooperation, they help translate global ESG commitments into practical, investable opportunities. This requires regulatory clarity, strong disclosure standards, and effective cross-border coordination.

The [Istanbul Financial Center](#) (IFC) approaches sustainable finance from the perspective of a dynamic emerging economy with strong regional linkages and deep connections to the real sector. Türkiye's diversified economic base provides a solid foundation for mobilizing capital toward long-term, sustainable investment.

What differentiates IFC is the integrated ecosystem we are building. Supported by a dedicated legislative framework and a purpose-built financial district, IFC is building an integrated environment that brings together public institutions, market participants, and international partners. Our intention is to facilitate efficient capital flows, contribute to the deepening of capital markets, and support the growth of sustainable finance as a practical and scalable area of economic activity.

As global financial ecosystems undergo profound transformation driven by sustainability, digitalisation, and geopolitical shifts, how does IFC envision its role within the international financial centers community over the coming years?

As sustainability imperatives, digitalization, and geopolitical realignments reshape global finance, IFC envisions itself as a resilient financial gateway across regions and systems. We position Istanbul as a complementary node linking Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia—where capital demand and capital supply structurally intersect. Recognizing Istanbul's centuries-long role as a natural bridge between continents, IFC has been developed as a vision project that adds a contemporary and institutional dimension to this historical connectivity through a purpose-built financial district.

Established under a dedicated legislative framework, IFC enhances Türkiye's capital market depth while offering investor protection, and fiscal incentives that strengthen international confidence. Our priorities focus on sustainable finance, Islamic capital markets, green and transition instruments, insurance and trading ecosystems, and fintech-enabled infrastructure.

Türkiye's well-established financial ecosystem, including its robust banking sector, provides a supportive foundation for cross-border financial cooperation, ESG aligned lending, and participation based finance. Through active engagement in networks such as the World Alliance, and through our strategic partnerships, IFC contributes to policy dialogue, regulatory convergence, and knowledge exchange— helping ensure that Istanbul plays a constructive and forward looking role in the ongoing transformation of global finance.

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Opinion by Thomas Krantz

WAIFC's Advisor to the
Managing Director



[Thomas Krantz](#) presents the 2025 WAIFC Annual Meeting's recognition of research advancing sustainable finance, where laureates explored how financial systems can drive carbon neutrality through innovative approaches.

The studies highlight critical insights: "Adaptation Finance for Emerging Markets" (Chan & Liao) demonstrates that adaptation-focused green bonds in emerging economies command a higher "green premium," offering a pathway to bridge climate adaptation funding gaps. "Greenwashing Risks in Corporate Climate Bond Markets" (Chan & Wan) introduces an expenditure-based method to assess greenwashing, revealing how institutional investors may unintentionally incentivize misleading environmental claims, risking misallocation of climate capital. Meanwhile, "Do International Financial Centres Enable Circular Economy Investment? Firm-Level Evidence from BRICS Economies" (Chahar et al.) shows that while IFCs are not the sole determinant, they play a pivotal role in fostering circular economy investments in BRICS economies.

► [More information](#)

NEWS



**World Alliance to Convene in
Busan for 2026 General Meeting**

The World Alliance has announced its 2026 General Meeting, to be held in Busan from September 14–17, bringing together leading financial hubs worldwide. Hosted by [Busan Finance Center](#), the event will focus on strengthening international cooperation, fostering dialogue, and tackling the evolving challenges in global finance.

Alongside the meeting, the [Young Academy Award 2026](#) will showcase research from three laureates, bridging academic insights with financial practice. The gathering aims to reinforce the World Alliance’s role as a global connector, shaping the future of international finance through collective action.

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The EU Roundtable of Financial Centers Convenes in Tallinn for Its Spring Meeting

The [EU Roundtable of Financial Centers](#) convened its spring meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, gathering representatives from Europe’s top financial hubs for two days of discussions on the future of EU finance. Key topics included the EU Savings and Investment Union (SIU), financial education, competitiveness, Open Finance frameworks, digital currencies, anti-money laundering (AML), and cybersecurity—reflecting a shared focus on innovation, stability, and trust.

Hosted by [FinanceEstonia](#) and chaired in 2026 by its leadership, the event featured contributions from distinguished guests and representatives from institutions like [FinanceMalta](#), [Paris Europlace](#), and [Frankfurt Main Finance](#). The Roundtable underscored its role in fostering collaboration and shaping a competitive, secure, and forward-looking financial landscape across Europe.

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NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS



**Casablanca Finance City
Authority and Nairobi
International Financial Centre
signed a memorandum of
understanding**

The [Casablanca Finance City Authority](#) (CFCA) and [Nairobi International Financial Centre](#) (NIFC) signed a landmark memorandum of understanding in Nairobi on March 25, 2026, witnessed by Morocco's Ambassador to Kenya, H.E. Abderrazzak Laassel, and Kenya's Ambassador to Morocco, H.E. [Jessica Gakinya](#). Their attendance underscored the strategic diplomatic backing and significance of the partnership for both nations.

The agreement seeks to strengthen ties between the two financial hubs, boosting trade and investment flows across Africa. It prioritizes three core areas: market access, financial innovation, and sustainability, aiming to drive economic integration and growth.

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Mauritius Expands Digital Leadership in Africa with ICT Roadshow Success

Mauritius strengthened its position as Africa's leading digital partner with a successful ICT roadshow in Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia, organized by the [Economic Development Board](#) and 11 private ICT companies. Over 300 participants attended forums in Windhoek, Gaborone, and Lusaka, with more than 150 one-on-one meetings fostering strategic alliances and investment discussions.

The roadshow included site visits to local digital ecosystems, enabling practical discussions and alignment on scalable solutions. Zambia's Minister of Science and Technology, Felix Mutati, joined as guest of honor, emphasizing the importance of cross-border digital cooperation. The event underscored Mauritius' role as a trusted digital innovation hub and highlighted a shared African vision for a tech-driven, inclusive future.

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AIFC Approves Shariah Governance Rules to Boost Islamic Finance Growth in Kazakhstan

The [Astana International Financial Centre](#) (AIFC) has approved new Shariah

Governance Rules to standardize Islamic finance operations, boosting transparency, governance, and investor trust. The rules set clear standards for Shariah boards, compliance, audits, and disclosure, aligning with global best practices.

Approved by the Islamic Finance Advisory Board, the move comes as Kazakhstan's Islamic finance sector enters rapid growth, with a potential market size of KZT 3.9 trillion for retail finance and KZT 2.8 trillion for deposits. AIFC is expanding its ecosystem—including financial institutions, advisory services, and legal support—while recent laws enabling "Islamic windows" further drive growth.

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Nairobi International Financial Centre Strengthens Kenya-Italy Ties to Boost Africa's Investment Hub Role

The [Nairobi International Financial Centre](#) (NIFC) recently hosted a high-level meeting led by CEO Daniel Mainda with Italy's Min. [Fabrizio Lobasso](#), [Giorgio Massotti](#) of CDP, and [Lorenzo Tagliaferri](#) of SACE. The talks focused on boosting Kenya-Italy collaboration in financial services, technology, and infrastructure, reinforcing Nairobi's role as Africa's top financial gateway and hub for fund domiciliation and startups.

The discussions aligned with Italy's Mattei Plan for Africa and Kenya Vision 2030, emphasizing investment, economic cooperation, and sustainable growth. The engagement highlighted financial services' role in driving long-term competitiveness and cross-border capital flows, further solidifying Nairobi's reputation as a globally competitive business and investment hub.

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Future
Finance
Poland

Trends in tokenization of financial instruments and stablecoin creation: Global and Polish perspective

In a [Future Finance Poland](#) article, [Krzysztof Walczak](#) explores how tokenization of real-world assets—including stablecoins, bonds, and real estate—could surge from \$0.6 trillion

to \$18.9 trillion by 2033, per BCG-Ripple forecasts.

The article underscores global regulatory advancements in hubs like Switzerland, the U.S., and Singapore, positioning tokenization as a transformative force for Poland's fintech and financial sectors. Walczak emphasizes that Poland's adoption will hinge on collaboration among regulators, banks, and fintechs to build robust infrastructure. Read the full article [here](#).

► [Read more](#)



ADGM Strengthens NPO Oversight with FATF-Aligned Risk Assessment to Combat Terrorist Financing

[Abu Dhabi Global Market](#) (ADGM) released a 2025 thematic review of its Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) sector, conducting a risk-based assessment focused on Terrorist Financing risks in line with FATF Recommendation 8.

The [report](#) enhances transparency in the NPO sector's risk profile, reaffirms ADGM's compliance with global standards, and supports proportionate supervision of NPOs. By clarifying regulatory expectations, ADGM provides stakeholders with actionable insights for ongoing risk mitigation. This initiative underscores ADGM's commitment to upholding international best practices in financial integrity.

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**Frankfurt
Main
Finance**

Frankfurt Main Finance Unveils FeiF to Revolutionize Financial Education at Global Money Week 2026

[Frankfurt Main Finance](#) (FMF), alongside [Deutsche Börse Group](#), [DZ BANK AG](#), and [Finanzen Hessen](#), launched the FeiF initiative—a flagship project blending digital and hands-on financial education—at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange's Opening Bell Ceremony.

FeiF, a Hessian Financial Centre Cabinet lighthouse project, centralizes financial knowledge on FMF's platform while offering immersive on-site experiences with local

financial institutions. FMF President [Oliver Behrens](#) and partners emphasized FeiF's mission: making finance tangible and engaging to empower informed decision-making. With school visits already underway, the initiative marks a collaborative push to advance financial literacy in Frankfurt and beyond.

► [Read more](#)

For additional news articles on WAIFC and its members, please subscribe the [weekly newsletter](#) of our Managing Director.

EVENTS

A promotional banner for a 'Public Speaking Masterclass'. The background is dark blue with a woman in a dark blue suit speaking into a microphone. The text is white and yellow. The main title is 'PUBLIC SPEAKING MASTERCLASS'. Below it, the subtitle is 'Enhance Your Presentation Skills & Boost Your Confidence'. The dates are '21st & 22nd April 2026', the time is '8:30am to 13:30', and the location is 'Trident Park Conference Hall'. There is a yellow button that says 'BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY!'. The FinanceMalta logo is in the bottom left corner.

PUBLIC SPEAKING
MASTERCLASS

*Enhance Your Presentation Skills &
Boost Your Confidence*

21st & 22nd
April 2026 | 8:30am to 13:30 | Trident Park
Conference Hall

BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY!

 FinanceMalta

[Public Speaking Masterclass](#)

The Public Speaking Masterclass, organised by [FinanceMalta](#), is an interactive two-day training programme designed to help professionals strengthen their communication and presentation skills in a business environment. This workshop will equip participants with the practical tools and techniques needed to deliver confident, structured, and impactful presentations.

April 21 to 22, 2026. Trident Park Malta, Triq L-Imdina, Birkirkara, Malta

► [More information](#)



TheCityUK International Conference 2026

Conference

23 April 2026

09:00 - 13:10 BST

Register now



[TheCityUK International Conference 2026](#)

[TheCityUK](#)'s International Conference 2026, sponsored by [Freshfields](#), will bring together senior leaders from across the financial and related professional services industry, policymakers and regulators to focus on how the UK can assert itself as a world-leading, international financial center in a new age of global competition.

April 23, 2026. Convene, 200 Aldersgate, EC1A 4HD, London, UK

► [More information](#)



CASABLANCA ARBITRATION DAYS

GLOBALISING MOROCCO'S DISPUTE RESOLUTION AMBITIONS

24 - 25 April 2026 | Royal Mansour Hotel - Casablanca

REGISTER NOW

[Casablanca Arbitration Days 2026](#)

Hosted by [Casablanca Finance City Authority](#) in partnership with [CIMAC–Casablanca International Mediation and Arbitration Centre](#), this landmark event will explore Morocco's evolving position in the global dispute resolution landscape. This 10-year milestone reflects CIMAC's continued commitment to positioning Morocco as a competitive international dispute resolution seat.

April 24 to 25, 2026. Royal Mansour Hotel - Casablanca, 27 Av. des FAR, Casablanca 20250, Marrocco

► [More information](#)



28 April 2026 | Shanghai Stock Exchange

AIFC CONNECT: SHANGHAI 2026



AIFC Connect: Shanghai

The [Astana International Financial Centre \(AIFC\)](#) invites you to attend AIFC Connect: Shanghai 2026 – a high-level international event aimed at strengthening collaboration between the financial ecosystems of Kazakhstan and China. The event will bring together senior representatives of financial institutions, regulators, investors, and industry leaders to explore opportunities for cross-border cooperation. Discussions will focus on capital markets, fintech, asset management, and sustainable finance, with an emphasis on practical partnerships and deal-making.

April 28, 2026. Shanghai Stock Exchange, Shanghai, China

► [More information](#)



Bahamas Global Wealth Summit

The Bahamas Wealth Summit is the premier gathering of global finance and policy professionals, organized by the [Bahamas Financial Services Board](#). This event unites experts from across the private wealth field, including legal, tax, compliance, fintech, and regulatory sectors.

May 1 to 2, 2026. Baha Mar Resorts (Baha Mar Room 1), Bahamas

► [More information](#)

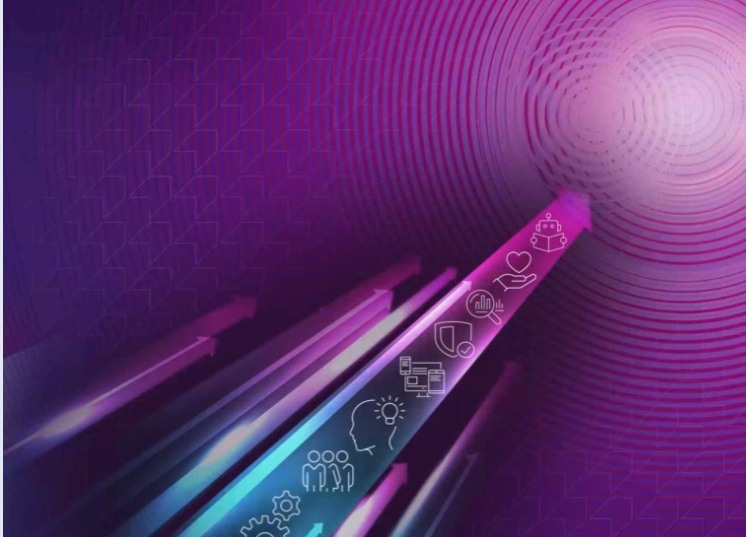
Hedge Fund COO Summit Middle East

Hedge Fund COO Summit Middle East

With Intelligence, in partnership with the [Dubai International Financial Centre](#), is hosting the Hedge Fund COO Middle East Summit exclusively for hedge fund managers in and around the UAE. The event will offer fund leaders an opportunity to network with peers and gain insights into how others are opening offices, expanding their operations and benefitting from having a base in the Middle East.

May 11 to 12, 2026. DIFC Conference Centre, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

► [More information](#)



TheCityUK and
Financial Services
Skills Commission
Future Skills
Conference 2026

Conference
21 May 2026
09:00 - 13:00 BST

Register now →

TheCityUK and Financial Services Skills Commission Future Skills Conference 2026

Organized in partnership with [Financial Services Skills Commission](#), the 2026 Future Skills Conference will bring together industry leaders, policymakers and emerging talent to explore how disruptive technologies are reshaping financial and related professional services, the skills required to harness this change and the actions needed to secure the UK's long-term competitiveness.

May 21, 2026. Convene, 200 Aldersgate Street, EC1A 4HD, London, UK

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JUNE 16-18, 2026

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN



TASHKENT

**INTERNATIONAL
INVESTMENT
FORUM**

5th Anniversary TIIF

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Tashkent International Investment Forum

Tashkent International Investment Forum is Central Asia's premier platform for global investors seeking access to one of the world's fastest-transforming markets. Uzbekistan today stands at the intersection of reform, capital and opportunity. With a rapidly growing economy, large-scale privatisation, energy transition, industrial modernisation and expanding regional connectivity, the country is becoming a new strategic hub for investment across Eurasia.

June 16 to 18, 2026. Central Asian Expocenter - CAEx Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Tashkent Viloyati, Uzbekistan

► [More information](#)

DOWNLOADS

Publications

- [WAIFC AI Report 2026](#)
- [Report on Strategies for Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Talent](#)
- [Whitepaper on Crafting the Digital Sustainability Reporting Ecosystem](#)
- [Report on Women in Finance - Compendium of Good Practice](#)
- [Report on Art - An Integral Ingredient for Financial Centers](#)
- [Whitepaper on Enhancing Supply Chain Finance for the Promotion of the Green Transformation](#)
- [Report on How Leading Financial Centers Advance Financial Inclusion and Literacy](#)
- [Report on Supporting Ecosystem for Sustained Recovery and Growth of SMEs](#)
- [Whitepaper on the Future of Financial Centers](#)
- [Bridging Continents: Unlocking Asia-Africa Opportunities](#)

Institutional

- [World Alliance Presentation](#)

The [World Alliance of International Financial Centers \(WAIFC\)](#) is a non-profit association registered in Belgium, representing 27 leading international financial centers. Its members are government agencies, associations, and similar institutions developing

and promoting their financial centers. WAIFC facilitates cooperation between financial centers, exchanging best practices, and communication with the general public.

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Vice-Chair:

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