

STREAMLINING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



His Royal Highness
Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa

Prime Minister



His Majesty
King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

The King of the Kingdom of Bahrain



His Royal Highness
Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa

Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander
and First Deputy Prime Minister

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Message of the Chairman

Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry

To become the leading voice of the business community

Dear members of the General Assembly,

On behalf of myself and the members of the board of directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, I am pleased to present you the Annual Report 2018, covering the first year of the 29th term of the board of directors and shedding a scope light on the achievements made.

We are privileged for the confidence bestowed upon us to lead the region's first chamber and build on the milestone achievements made since its inception in 1939. We vow exerting all efforts to create an ecosystem that fosters the growth and development of Bahrain's private sector and reinforces the competitiveness and sustainability of the national economy in line with the leadership's far-sighted economic vision.

This is an opportunity to pay tribute to the wise leadership of the Kingdom of Bahrain spearheaded by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, for empowering the chamber's standing as a representative of the private sector and a partner in economic-decisions, and laying the foundation for a robust public-private partnership.

The partnership unified the efforts of the government represented by its ministries, authorities, and organizations, to those of the private sector represented by the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and paved the way for the achievement of mutually beneficial outcomes, such as having the Commercial Registration fees reduced.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all and underline your pivotal role to the success of your chamber, and renew our commitment to continue supporting the private sector and advocating its interest.

Sameer Abdulla Nass
Chairman

» We are privileged for the confidence bestowed upon us to lead the region's first chamber and build on the milestone achievements made since its inception in 1939.

“We vow exerting all efforts to create an ecosystem that fosters the growth and development of Bahrain's private sector and reinforces the competitiveness and sustainability of the national economy in line with the leadership's far-sighted economic vision”





CEO's Message

Aiming at achieving the highest levels of partnership between the public and private sectors

» We will consider the best ways to develop the Chamber's administrative work, enhance its efficiency and insist on excellence in providing services to members.

Distinguished Members of the Assembly General,

I am pleased to extend my congratulations to the Chairman and members of the Board of Directors of Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) for their success in the elections of the 29th session held last year in March 2018. I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to them for their interest and cooperation with the executive and administrative staff of the Chamber. I also extend my deep appreciation to all the employees at the Chamber for their great efforts over the past period. The Bahraini private sector is on the threshold of an important new phase, and it is an ambitious vision aimed at achieving the highest levels of partnership between the public and private sectors.

In this regard, we worked during the previous phase with the administrative staff of the Chamber to prepare our executive plan to be in line with the next phase of economic growth and sustainability and to be consistent with the vision of the Board of Directors. This led us to study the internal and external environment of the Chamber and to monitor the mechanisms of the administrative, technical and legal systems and how they relate to and harmonize with the external environment represented in the list of members and regulators and legislators and external relations.

We are pleased to assure the members of the General Assembly that we have launched a series of initiatives that will be implemented within a specific time frame and through clear, measurable and controlled mechanisms to achieve the desired results, aiming at consolidating the principle of sustainable development that is in line with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030.

From this perspective, we will consider the best ways to develop the Chamber's administrative work, enhance its efficiency and insist on excellence in providing services to members. We will also invest in information technology, and develop the Chamber's automated system to simplify various procedures that will save time and cost and elevate the quality of providing services. The Chamber's role has been activated with regards to finding work mechanisms that aim to protect the interests of its members. This includes participating in decision-making with the government through conducting economic studies and research to serve members' interests and to eliminate the obstacles they face to elevate their work, and to contribute to the enactment of legislation and laws adapted to the requirements of the public interest.

This is what the Chamber was keen to achieve and work on during the past year, and the success of the decision to reduce the fees of commercial records is one of these achievements. The Chamber's cooperation with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism under the guidance of the leadership and the wise directives of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister affirms the active role it takes and adopts to defend the rights of the Chamber's members.

In this context, I assure you that we at the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry are working to provide support to the local private sector through hosting specialized events and workshops and through the work program of the sectoral and joint committees in order to ensure cohesion between the Chamber and its members and the development of these commercial sectors.

The Chamber is committed to serving the interests of the business community and has continuously worked on bolstering international relations to identify new investment opportunities and assist in improving their trade prospects and development outside the Kingdom, and to help them face heightened international competition and ease their participation in relevant regional and global events.

Today, we aim to meet the needs of the Bahraini business community that believes that the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry is its first destination to express its concerns to and discuss its issues with. Consequently, the Chamber can present these issues to the decision makers in relevant governmental bodies and institutions in the Kingdom. The executive management aspires to maintain continued trust between the Chamber and its associates.

In conclusion, we are confident that these efforts will be reflected in day to day activities during the coming period with the blessing of the wise leadership, the guidance of the distinguished Board of Directors, and the efforts of our qualified staff.

Shaker Ibrahim Al Shater
Chief Executive Officer

Vision, Mission and Core Values

Since its inception in 1939, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) played a prominent role in shaping the national economy of Bahrain and creating a vigorous private sector.

It has kept abreast of the fast-paced economic and social developments, and consolidated its efforts to stimulate the growth and expansion of the private sector and empower its role in the economic development of the country alongside the public sector.

The confidence bestowed upon the chamber by the wise leadership reinforced its influence on economic decisions and streamlined its endeavor to create an attractive ecosystem that fosters the flourish of businesses. In addition, the growing base of its members contributed to reinstating its standing as the sole representative of the private sector and an advocate of its interest.

Mission

To represent the private sector and play an influential role in protecting its interest

Positioning Statement

Our members deserve an efficient responsive organization. One that can assist them to grow, succeed, and protect their interests.

Tagline

Your business Partner

Vision

To become the leading voice of the business community, and an influential partner in economic decision-making

Value Proposition

An organization driven by talented committed staff focused at providing the best services and help for the present and the future

Core Values



Bold

At BCCI we recognize the challenges we face in the private sector. This requires us to be bold, to take action, and make decisions. We must deal with challenges, and respond to change to achieve positive results.



Transparent

We are committed to our members and are keen to win the confidence and respect of the commercial market in what we do.



Committed

Is essential for each of us to be able to deal with the challenges we all face now and in the future.



Loyal

We work for one institution, BCCI. Not for a specific person or entity. We are committed to the faithfulness of BCCI and its members.



Innovative

Today is the main engine of strong economies and leading institutions in the world, and we need to embrace it and work on change in the BCCI.



Inclusive

We serve all of our members regardless of size, sectors, gender and sect. The challenges that confront us unite us.

Board of Directors



Sameer Abdulla Nass
Chairman



Khalid Mohamed Najibi
First Vice-Chairman



Mohamed Abduljabbar Alkooheji
Second Vice-Chairman



Aaref Ahmed Hejres
Treasurer



Waleed Ebrahim Kanoo
Vice-Treasurer



Basim Mohamed Al Saie
Executive Committee Member



Mohamed Farooq Al Moayyed
Executive Committee Member



Abdulhussain Khalil Dewani
Board Member



Khalid Rashed Al Zayani
Board Member



Sh. Hend Bint Salman Al Khalifa
Board Member



Jameel Yusuf Al Ghanah
Board Member



Ramez Mohamed Al Awadhi
Board Member



Dr. Waheeb Ahmed Al Khaja
Board Member



Abdulhakeem Ebrahim Al Shemari
Board Member



Ahmed Abdulla Binhindi
Board Member



Sonya Mohamed Janahi
Board Member



Batool Mohamed Dadabai
Board Member



Ahmed Sabah Al Saloom
Board Member

Bahrain's Economic Performance 2018

Significant Economic Achievements According to International Standards

Economic growth rate amounted to

1.09%

» Bahrain succeeded in attracting 76 foreign companies with a total investment of 810 million US dollars

It is with pride that we reflect on the vibrant economic performance of Bahrain during 2018, which reinstates Bahrain's economic standing in the region and reflects the high level of coordination between the public and private sector.

This performance is attributed to the Kingdom of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, which paired with the bundle of reforms and initiatives that aim to reinforce the resilience and vitality of the economy pave the way for sustainable growth and development.

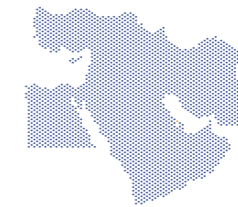
In 2018, Bahrain's economy achieved notable progress, particularly considering the moderate oil prices and the growth of the non-oil sector. The economic growth rate amounted to 1.09% up to the end of the third quarter, according to Bahrain Economic Quarterly report issued by the Economic Development Board.

The non-oil sector, which constitutes more than 80% of the Kingdom's Gross

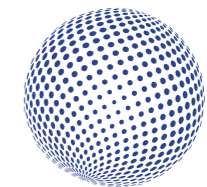
Domestic Product, achieved a 2.4% growth. Additionally, according to Meed Projects, the total value of infrastructure projects in Bahrain reached about 87 billion USD, growing annually at 3.8%. MENA region growth is expected to reach 3% within 2019 according to the latest report issued by the Economic Development Board.

As for the Bahrain Information and e-Government Authority statistics on annual growth rates of the non-oil sector, the third and fourth quarters of 2018 witnessed a positive performance, with a 0.34% growth for the personal and social services sector, 0.81% for the construction sector, 0.72% for the financial sector, 12.67% for government services, and %0.39 for business and real-estate. In addition, the trade balance deficit amounted to 2.8 billion Bahraini dinars in 2018, with total imports of 5.6 billion BHD and exports of 2.8 billion BHD.

As for the contribution of the private sector to the Gross Domestic Product



3 in the Middle East
on favorable business environment index



54 internationally
In terms of economic freedom, as for 2019 Heritage Index

The non-oil sector achieved a growth of

2.4%

» which constitutes more than 80% of the Kingdom's Gross Domestic Product

(GDP), the non-financial projects' share of the GDP is 68.5%. 45% of that is attributed to the private sector representing various business activities in manufacturing, construction, trade, hospitality and restaurants, transportation and telecommunication, real-estate and business services. On the other hand, the financial sector represents 16.14% of the GDP according to Bahrain Information and e-Government Authority's report on Fourth Quarter of 2018 National Accounts.

The World Bank ranked Bahrain third in the Middle East and 62nd globally for ease of doing business, up four ranks from the year before. Bahrain has also made notable reforms, including the protection of minority investors by reinforcing the role of shareholders in major decisions, and reducing the time needed for imports by upgrading the single-window system.

Moreover, Bahrain's economic performance was driven by a number of growing sectors including the Information and

Communication Technology (ICT) sector. According to a report published by KPMG, Bahrain is among the most competitive and productive countries. Bahrain was ranked 44th in the 2017-2018 Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum, climbing 4 ranks from the 2016-2017 report.

In terms of economic freedom, Bahrain's score is 66.4, and it ranks 5th regionally and 54th internationally according to the 2019 Heritage Index.

Timeline of 2018

The fast-paced economic, political, and social changes coupled with the economic challenges facing the region and the world have largely influenced the priorities of the board of directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



2018

Mar

- » 2 Board of Directors' Elections for the 29th session
- » Board of Directors first meeting
- » Postponement of the implementation of Commercial Registration (CR) fees
- » Form the consulting council

Apr

- » The General Assembly Meeting

May

- » Restructure the sector committees and reducing them to 10
- » Accepting all members' candidacy applications
- » The Ramadan Majlis

Jun

- » The open meeting on the impact of the new CR fees

Jul

- » Form the Committees' Steering Group
- » Name committees' heads
- » Amendment of law on overtime calculation

Aug

- » Launch a Live Chat feature on the official website
- » Organize training courses to develop employees' skills

Sep

- » Launch BCCI's Best Idea Award

Oct

- » Approve the new Commercial Registration fees

Nov

- » Launch of a promotional program to introduce investment opportunities in Bahrain

Dec

- » Organize a series of sector-specific workshops regarding VAT
- » Launch the Members' Complaints Unit

2019

Board of Directors' Report

Firm steps Towards the right path

Since the outset of the 29th term of the board of directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an ambitious target-specific work strategy was created with the principal goal of revamping the chamber, keeping it abreast of economic changes, and meeting the aspirations of the members and the business community. The board's strategy was formulated following thorough analysis of the chamber's genuine role and tasks, coupled with close monitoring of most recent economic changes and challenges facing the private sector.

The board's strategy focuses on four areas, namely revising the business and investment laws and legislations,

revitalizing the markets and encouraging the adoption of latest technologies, attracting investments and invigorating trade to diversify sources of income, and solidifying the chamber's standing as a representative of the private sector.

The board of directors has exerted strenuous efforts to resolve issues of concern to the private sector, and succeeded in reaching tangible results. It is committed to continuing with the same assertiveness to meet the aspirations of the private sector.

Below are some of accomplishments of the board of directors during the first year of its term.

The elections of the 29th board of directors



» BCCI Board of Directors Elections for the 29th session

The elections process for the 29th board of directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) was commenced on Saturday 10th March 2018 at 8:00 a.m. and according to Resolution no. (156) for the year 2013 of the executive law issued by decree law no. (48) for the year 2012 with regard to Bahrain Chamber of

Commerce and Industry, and the conditions and procedures approved by the Elections Committee. It was held in the presence of all members of the Elections Committee, the representative of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism, and observers from Bahrain Transparency Society.

Liaison with the wise leadership



» Meeting His Majesty The King



» Meeting HRH Prime Minister

» Meeting HRH Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister

The board of directors had the honor of meeting the wise leadership and addressing the concerns of the private sector directly. Those meetings constituted a viable opportunity to reinstate

the chamber's keenness on working in line with the leadership's ambitious and far-sighted economic vision.

Meetings of the board of directors



» The first BCCI Board of Directors meeting

7 Board of Directors Meetings

In addition to 4 extraordinary meetings

Identifying the hurdles curbing the progress of the various sectors of the national economy and mulling means of overcoming them.

During the period covered by this report, the board of directors held a total of 7 meetings in addition to 4 extraordinary meetings. These meetings centered on identifying the hurdles curbing the progress of the various sectors of the national economy and

mulling means of overcoming them in cooperation with the concerned officials and organizations, as well as through the chamber's sector committees. Below, some of key topics discussed during the board meetings:

- Consolidating the chamber's tie with its members.
- Emphasizing the role of the chamber in drawing up economic policies, and enhancing cooperation with ministries and other official bodies.
- Empowering the chamber's committees in their endeavor to revitalize the sectors they represent, and monitoring their progress.
- Interacting with the business community, identifying its obstacles, and convening relevant bodies to probe solutions.
- Reinstating the chamber's mission through the various media channels.
- Revamping coordination with the legislative and executive branches of the government, as well as the relevant civil society organizations.
- Upgrading the services of the chamber and aspiring to transform it into a smart organization.

Strengthening the executive body of the chamber



» BCCI executives and administrative staff

Knowing the pivotal role of the employees of any organization in translating its vision into tangible outcomes, the board of directors has intensified its efforts to upgrade the performance of the employees of the chamber at all levels. The board created a comprehensive employees' development plan with specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure their progress objectively. The development plan emphasized on the following:

- Altering the work culture and reinstating key values such as competitiveness, productivity, and sustainability. In addition to offering motivation incentives.
- Upgrading the administrative and technical systems, and developing the chamber's sources of income.
- Offering academic and professional training to the employees in a bid to uplift their performance and invigorate their productivity to match the developmental philosophy of the board.
- Aiding the organization with top qualified national cadre and updating the internal regulations to spur the development process.
- Adhering to international standards in evaluating the performance of the employees.

Bolstering liaison with the members



» Field Trips to several commercial markets (Riffa Souq)

Knowing the fundamental role of the members in empowering the chamber and streamlining its endeavors that aim at enhancing the vitality of the national economy and diversifying sources of income, the board was keen on sustaining transparent and unbounded communication with its members by holding regular meetings and functions. These meetings constitute a platform for the members to communicate their issues, raise their concerns, and make proposals and suggestions. Below are some of these meetings:

- The Ramadan Majlis, which witnessed wide participation from members of the business community.
- The General Assembly Meeting held on 22nd April 2018
- An open meeting on the impact of the new Commercial Registration fees
- The regular sector-focused consultative meetings

In addition to eliciting members' view point in market-related matters via electronic questionnaires, and allowing all members to apply for committee membership.

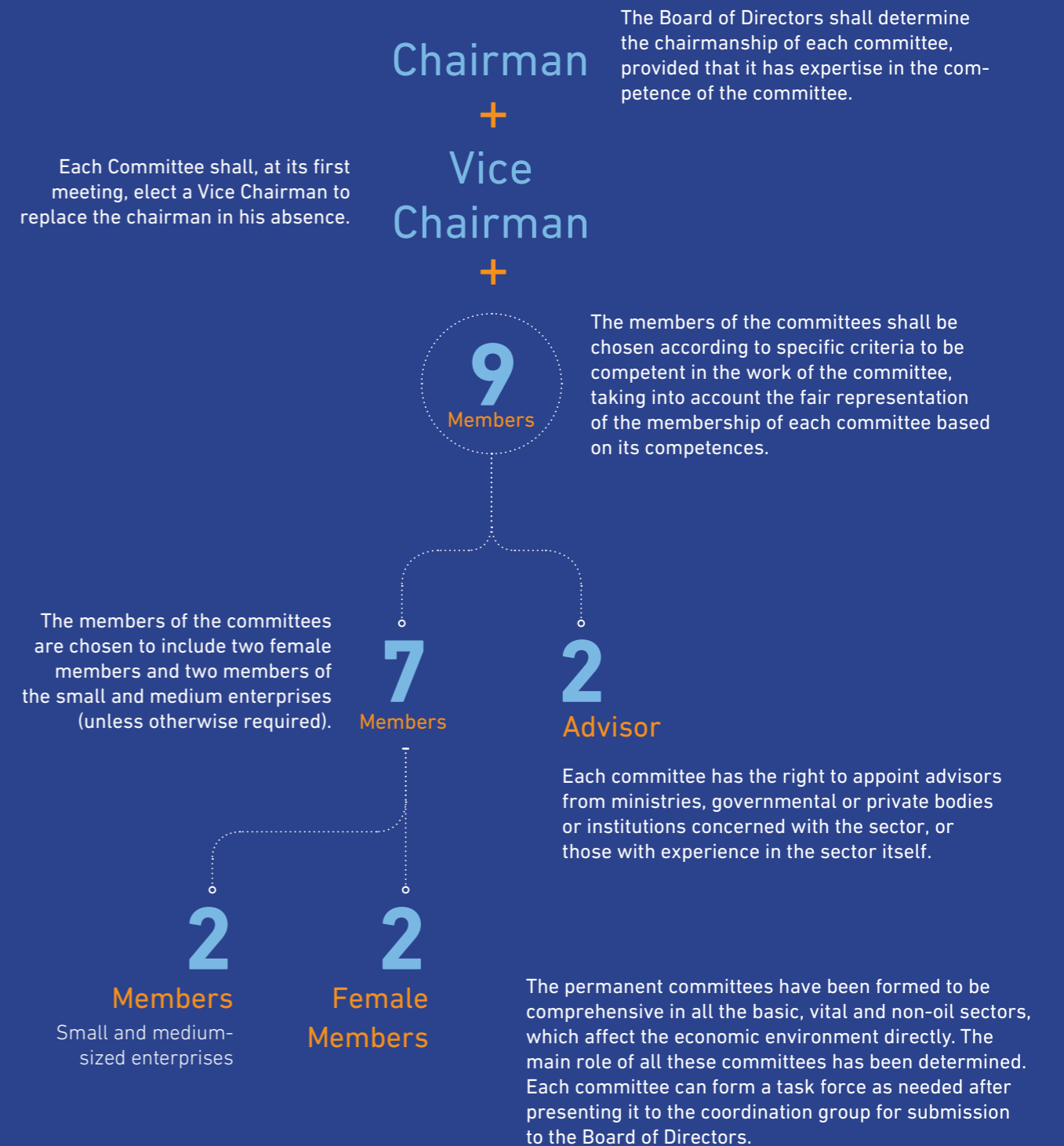
Restructuring the committees

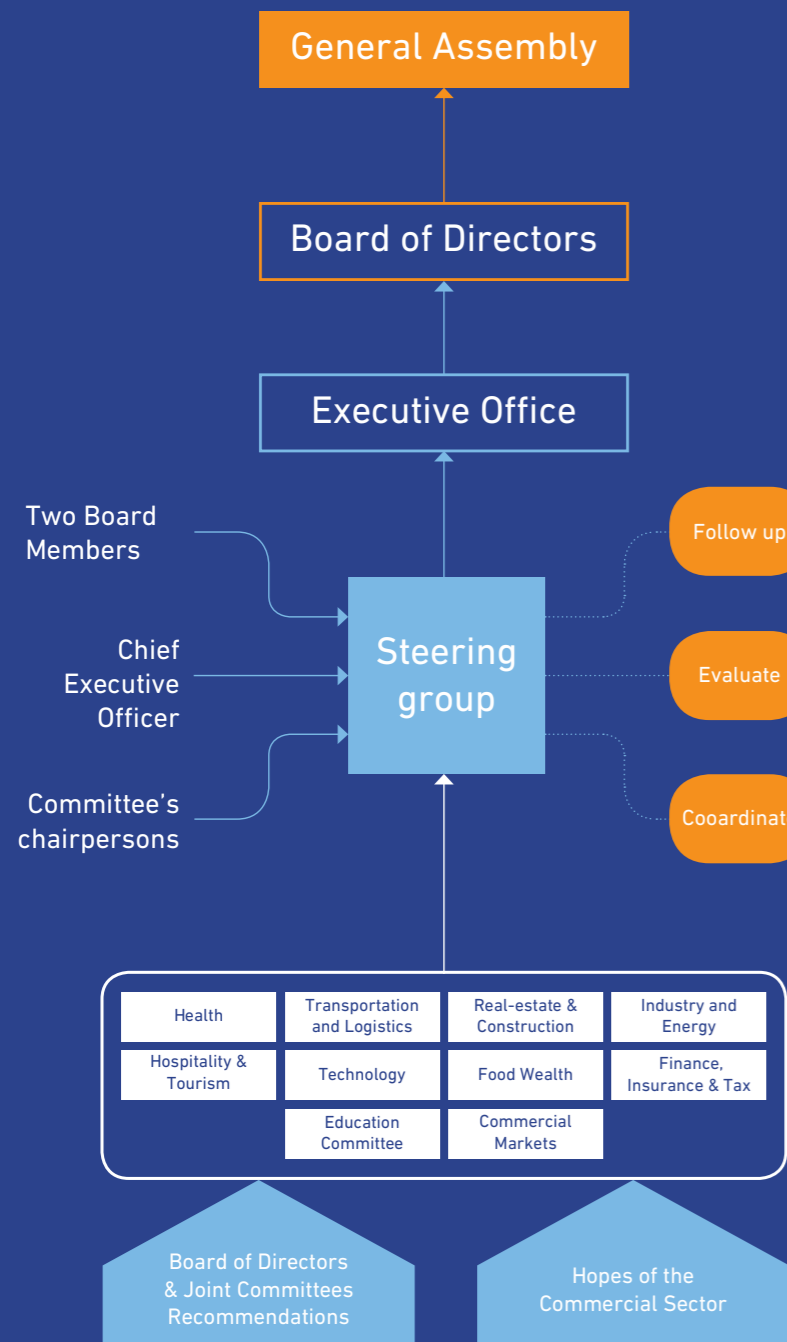
- » Committees has been reduced to 10 out of 24 committee previously
- » A total of 700 applications for committee membership were received, of which 90 were approved

In a bid to match the leadership's vision stressing on diversifying sources of income and ensuring the sustainable growth of the national economy, the board of directors has taken strides to revamp and empower its sector committees, as summarized in the bulletin points below:

1. Restructuring the sector committees and reducing their number to only 10, representing the most vital and promising non-oil sectors.
2. Allowing the permanent committees to create their own taskforces as need arises.
3. Restricting the period of committee membership to two years.
4. Monitoring the performance of the committees and ensuring their adherence to their action plans in line with the board's overall vision and strategy.
5. Accepting all members' candidacy applications for committee membership.
6. Setting objective selection criteria for the heads of the committees.
7. Forming a coordination team responsible for streamlining cooperation among the 10 committees, monitoring and evaluating the committees, and preparing quarterly reports on the committees' performance. The coordination team has as its members the heads of all the committees, two board members, and the Chief Executive Officer.

Main Committees Membership Structure





8. Holding an annual meeting to deliberate about all the proposals made by the committees and approved by the board. The proposals are to center on invigorating the national economy and steering it in harmony to the country's economic vision 2030.

9. Expanding the responsibilities of the committees to include:

- Stimulating relations among the businesses of each sector.
- Identifying the issues of concern to sectors they represent as well as the hurdles curbing their progress, and making proposals that serves to eliminate them or mitigate their impact.
- Probing means of fostering the competitiveness of businesses within each sector.
- Analyzing the impact of local, regional, and international economic trends and changes on the performance of the sectors of the national economy.
- Submitting a two-year-strategy.
- Presenting quarterly reports detailing their activities and accomplishments.
- Preparing annual reports on the sectors they represent. The reports are to include the performance of the particular sector, the contribution of the committee to the sector's progress, and a future plan outlining the measures to be taken to develop the sector.

10. Strategic planning workshops were organized for all the committees, in which they were trained on formulating their strategies and setting measurable and achievable long-term and short-term goals.

11. Specifying the tasks and responsibilities of the committees and supporting them to achieve their goals, which are:

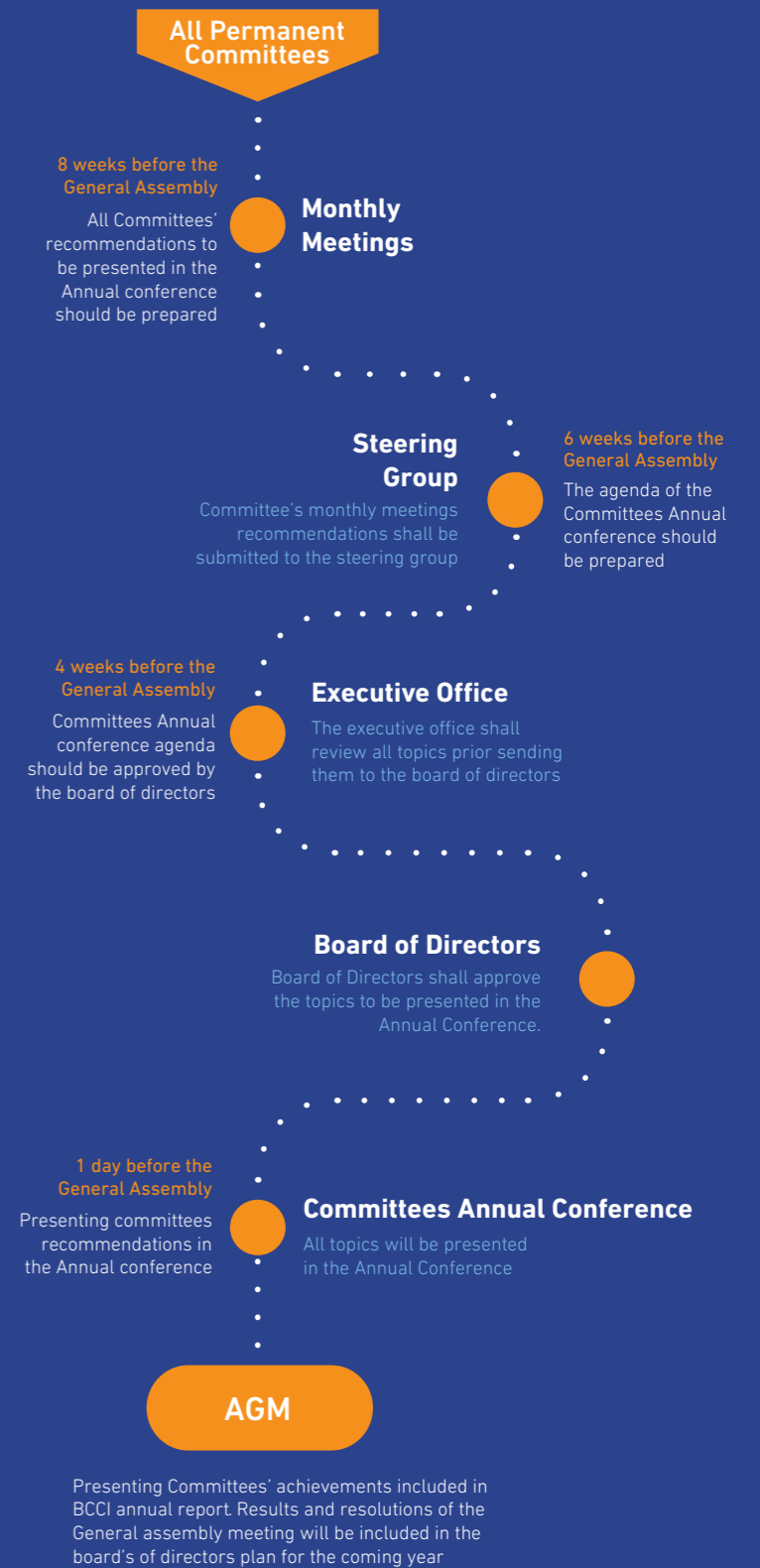
- Identifying the challenges and hurdles of the sectors they represent.
- Making proposals that aim at developing and upgrading the sectors.
- Looking into matters raised by the board of directors or the executive bureau.
- Fostering coordination between the business sectors and the relevant official bodies.
- Examining the sector-related legislations and making proposals.

12. A comprehensive term of reference was prepared, which specifies the scope of work and responsibilities of each of the ten sector committees namely:

- The Industry and Energy
- the Real-estate & Construction
- the Transportation and Logistics
- the Health
- the Finance, Insurance & Tax
- the Food Wealth
- the Technology
- the Hospitality & Tourism
- the Commercial Markets (which includes two sub-committees representing beauty salons and stalled businesses)
- and the Education Committee.

13. A guidebook detailing the committees' role and responsibilities, regulations and work procedures, and performance evaluation mechanism was distributed to the committees to ensure synergy among the committees and the harmony with the board's vision.

14. Defining the role and responsibilities of the heads and members of the committees.



The Consulting Council



» The first Consulting Council meeting

The board of directors of the 29th term has taken an unprecedented step by forming a consulting council which aims at assisting the board in crucial matters, taking part in shaping strategic decisions and stances of the chamber, and making proposals. The council, which comprises of leading businessmen and former chamber heads with hands-on experience, functions as an integral part of the board's decision-making mechanism.

Reinstating the standing of the chamber and ensuring its autonomy

» Updating the chamber's bylaw by means that empowers the chamber's standing and reinstate its autonomy.

Following the General Assembly's decision to authorize the board of directors to take the necessary legal measures to amend and update the chamber's bylaw, the board of directors formed a legal team with the chief responsibility of revising and updating the chamber's bylaw by means that empowers the chamber's standing and reinstate its autonomy.

The legal team, in coordination with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism, proposed some amendments, which were endorsed by both the chamber's board of directors and the Minister of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism.

The transition to a smart organization



Live Chat

» communicating with members by launching a Live Chat feature on the official website

Since the outset of its term, the board of directors has set transforming the chamber into a smart organization and encouraging its members to adopt technological advancement and embrace E-commerce as a priority. The chamber

has also employed technology to enhance the efficiency of its communication with its members by launching a Live Chat feature on its official website and developing a mobile application which will be launched soon.

Partnering with the members

The board of directors believes in the right of the members to shape the trajectory of the organization that represents them and influence its actions and decisions, hence has exerted all efforts to revamp liaison between the chamber and its members. In this regard, and in a bid to gain thorough understanding of the obstacles facing the members, the board held a number of open meetings in addition to one-on-one meetings with members from across the sectors of the economy. The board also plans to achieve the following in the forthcoming period:

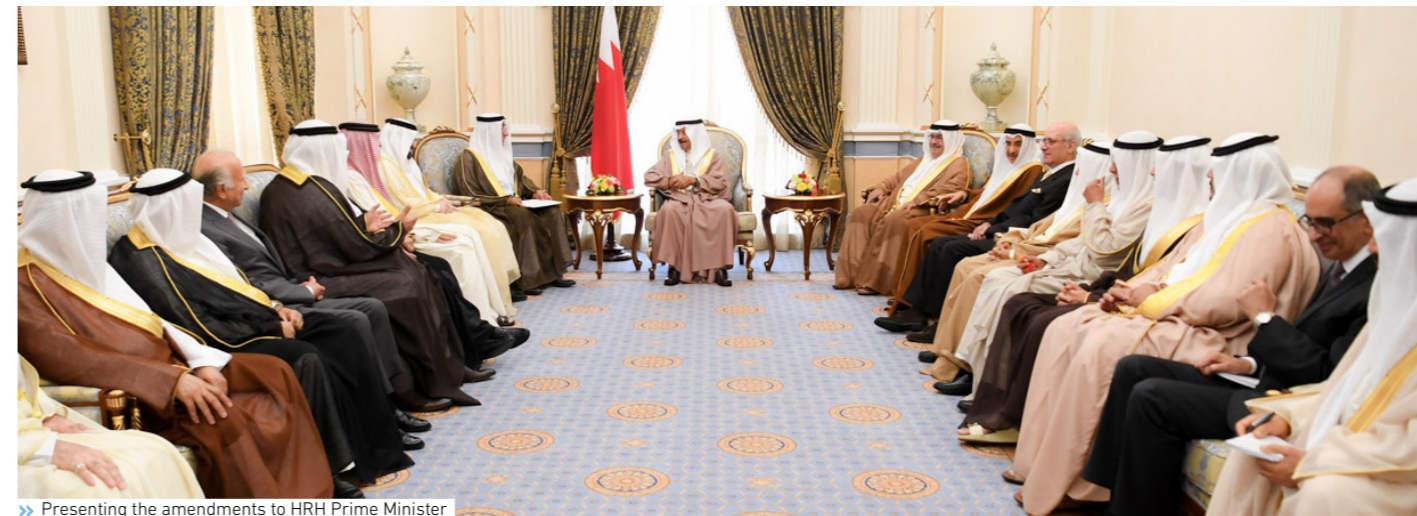
- Eliciting members' perspectives and proposals on developing the work mechanism of the chamber.
- Basing the chamber's strides to alter and update its systems and work mechanism on scientific data.
- Looking into the criticism, suggestions, and comments raised by the members.
- Perceiving members' expectations regarding communication with the chamber, and probing means to meet their aspirations.
- Evaluating the responsiveness of the various government bodies to the endeavors of the chamber.

Assigning a taskforce responsible for conducting research

Toward the end of 2018, the chamber established a workforce responsible for conducting research to find out the implications of allowing companies with foreign capitals to engage in various business activities at different percentages. The chamber also established another taskforce comprising

of employers, workers, and legal professionals with the core responsibility of conducting research on the Labor Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA). The outcomes and recommendations of both research will be shared with the business community.

Requesting the amendment of law on overtime calculation



» Presenting the amendments to HRH Prime Minister

» protect the rights of both the employers and employees and ensure a vigorous work environment

The board of directors adopted the plea made by large companies to have article 54 of the 2012 Private Sector Law on the calculation of overtime amended, the board joined efforts with relevant bodies

to have this law article amended and protect the rights of both the employers and employees and ensure a vigorous work environment.

» The Bahrain Chamber has sought paving the way for their expansion to promising markets.

Encouraging the expansion of local businesses

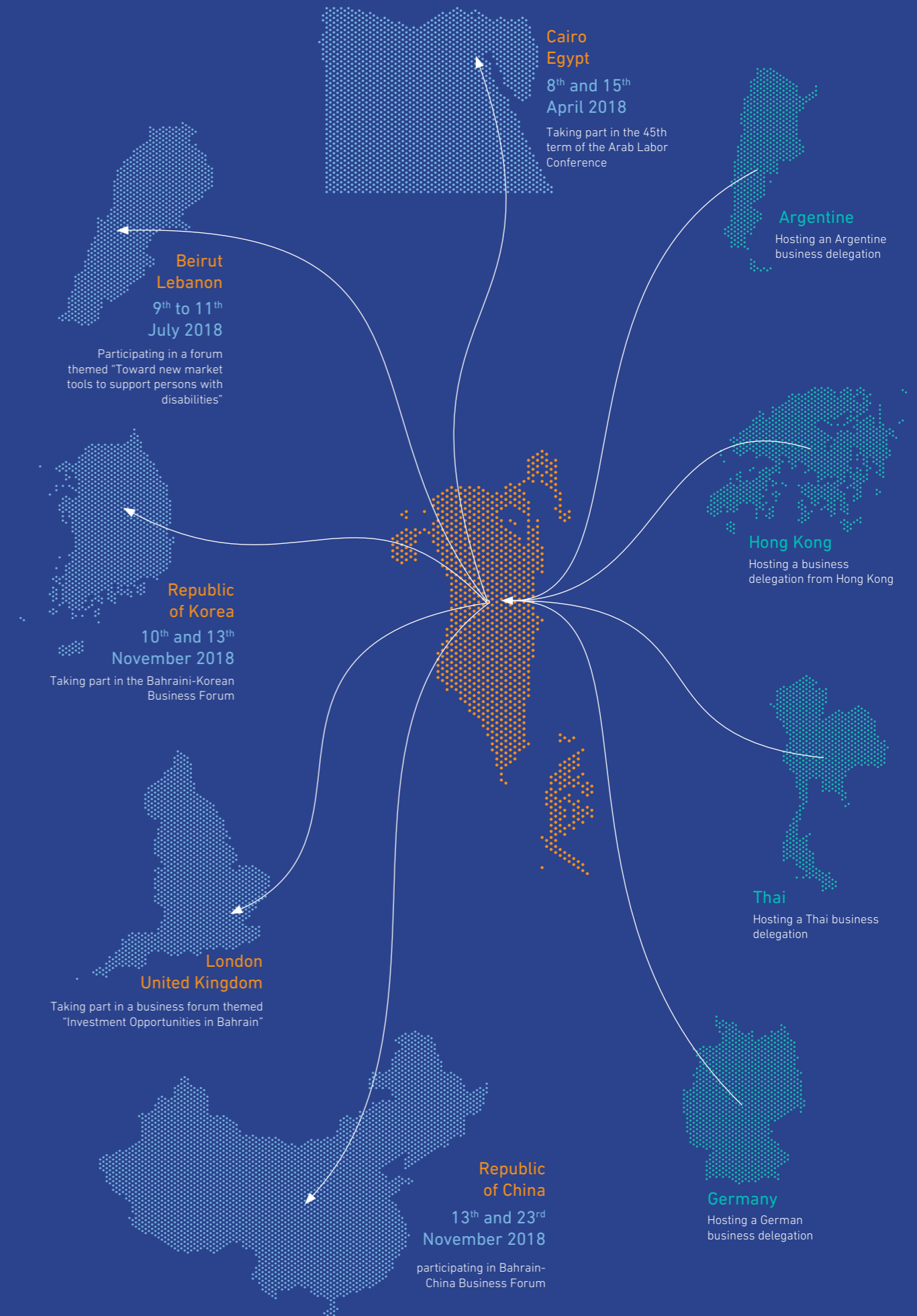
In their endeavor to empower local business and reinforce their presence in the region and the world, the Bahrain Chamber has sought paving the way for their expansion to promising markets. It has in this regard hosted a number of business delegations, and mulled the prospect of venturing in the markets of brotherly and friendly countries.

During the period covered by this report, the Bahrain Chamber received 6 foreign business delegations from China, Thailand, Hong Kong, Germany, and Argentina. It also took part in 15 business events in different countries, and held 22 meetings with diplomatic envoys.

Foreign exposure

As part of the chamber's mission to represent Bahrain's private sector, promote the Kingdom of Bahrain, and attract foreign investments, the chamber took part in a number of key functions. Below a list of these functions:

- Taking part in the 45th term of the Arab Labor Conference, which was held in Cairo between 8th and 15th April 2018. The chamber's delegation was spear-headed by chairman Mr. Sameer Nass, who was elected for the post of deputy chairman of employers' committee of the conference.
- Participating in a forum themed "Toward new market tools to support persons with disabilities", which was held in Beirut from 9th to 11th July 2018. The forum was organized by the Arab Labor Organization and the Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities, and stressed on protecting the rights of people with disabilities and reinforcing their integration in the labor market. Through its participation in this event, the chamber contributed to rectifying the false image about the Kingdom of Bahrain and had the opportunity to highlight Bahrain's strides to empower, protect, and ensure the rights of people with disabilities.
- Visiting the Republic of Korea between 10th and 13th November 2018, and taking part in the Bahraini-Korean Business Forum. The visit also included business-to-business meetings, and on the sidelines, officials from the Bahrain Chamber convened their counterparts from Korea Chamber and probed cooperation in streamlining and stimulating business and trade between both friendly countries.
- Visiting the People's Republic of China between 13th and 23rd November 2018 and participating in Bahrain-China Business Forum. The visit resulted in signing a number of joint agreements that aims at fostering business cooperation and transferring experience.
- Taking part in a business forum themed "Investment Opportunities in Bahrain", which was organized by the U.K-based Diplomat Business Club and held at the Palace of Westminster in London in the presence of key British Members of Parliament, leaders, officials, and business owners. The event aimed at attracting foreign investments, highlighting business and partnership opportunities in Bahrain, and reaffirming Bahrain's image as an attractive and friendly business and investments destination.
- A delegation of members of the Board of Directors participated in the meetings and events of the Federation of GCC Chambers which were held in each of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the State of Kuwait and the Sultanate of Oman. The Chamber delegates also participated in the meetings of the Union of Arab Chambers in Riyadh, Kuwait and Algeria. The Chamber has also formed a delegation of members of the Consultative Council to visit the State of Kuwait and the Sultanate of Oman.





» During a VAT workshop at Bait Al Tijjar

A total of

1036

attended this event along
three days

The Value Added Tax

In a bid to raise the awareness of the private sector on the implementation and implications of the Value-Added-Tax, which was due on 1st January 2019, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry represented by its Finance, Insurance and Tax Committee held a series of sector-specific workshops.

The workshops centered on the procedures for registering in the Taxation Bureau, the requirements, the proper implementation of the tax, and its probable implications.

The chamber also established a joint work committee with the Ministry of Finance, which came in implementation to the leadership's directives to review

the work frame of the Value-Added-Tax (VAT) during the trial phase. The joint committee also deliberated about the technical and legal aspects of the tax, and took into consideration the readiness of the private sector.

Slashing C.R fees

In manifestation to fruitful public-private partnership, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry succeeded in responding to the pressing demand of the business community to have the new Commercial Registration (C.R) fees reduced.

The success is attributed to the wise directives of the Premier on suspending the new C.R fees and assigning the chamber to mull possible alternatives, coupled with the joint efforts between the chamber and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism which resulted in succeeding to reduce the fees to adequate levels.

The Chamber's initial proposal was to maintain the new fees within the range of neighboring Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries at BD 100 for new Commercial Registrations and BD 75 for the renewal of the Commercial Registration.

However, and following lengthy deliberations a consensus was reached, according to which the fees for new Commercial Registrations will be BD 50 with BD 100 for up to 3 business activities, beyond which additional BD 100 will be charged for each business activity.

Knowing that %83.24 of total C.Rs in Bahrain are involved in running 1 to 3 business activities, while the remaining %16.76 run more than 3 business activities, the percentage of businesses benefiting from the agreed upon fee structure is about %83.

تخفيض الرسوم بنسبة

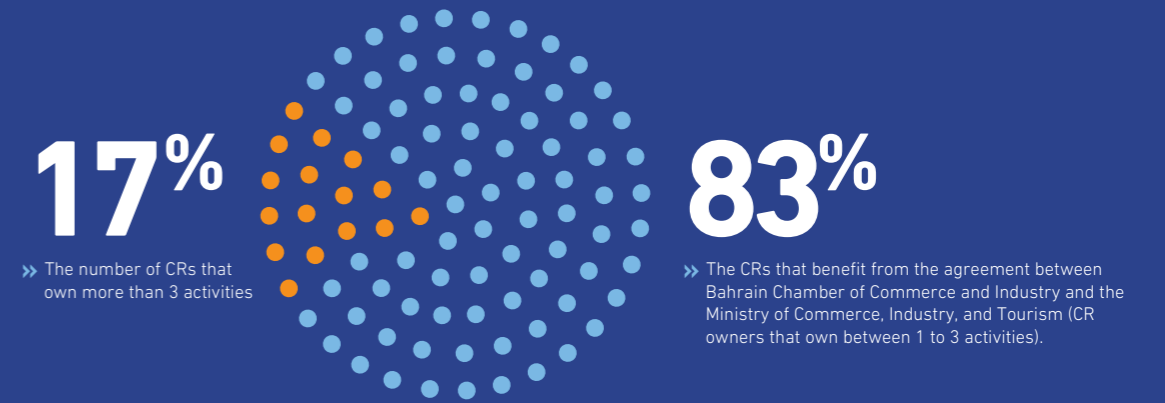
90%

في بعض القطاعات مثل القطاع الانشائي

Commercial Records Fees

Commercial Records Fees	CR Fees Options		
	By Branch		By CR
	Original Recommendation	BCCI's Recommendation	Recommendation after Negotiations
	Associated Fees are based on the proposed regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CR fees: 100 BHD Renewal: 75 BHD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CR fees: 50 BHD 100 BHD fixed fee for 1-3 activities 100 BHD for every additional activity
Number of CRs that the fees will apply to	78,541	78,541	44,872

The CRs that benefit from the agreement



Various Sector Activities:

The Chamber has organized and participated in many economic activities, in order to enhance communication with the commercial sector, including but not limited to:

14-21 July 2018

The field visit of the committee of commercial markets to all markets and commercial centers in the Kingdom, in order to discuss the problems that face them with the concerned authorities in the Kingdom.

6-4 September 2018

Cooperation of the Real Estate and Construction Committee with the International Labor Organization (ILO) to organize a discussion session on the good practices to protect the interests of workers in the building and construction sector.

2 October 2018

Cooperation of the Technology Committee with the Economic Development Board to organize (BCCI Summit: Products for the World Building Technology)

17 October 2018

Cooperation of the Technology Committee with the Chamber within the team developing the electronic program used in the Chamber for accounts and customer services (BBMS (. The Committee also participated in the Mobile Phone Application Development Team (BCCI Mobile APP)

24 October 2018

Launching the second edition of the Food Product Award by the Food Wealth Committee. The winner will be announced during the first quarter of 2019. A promotional program was approved in coop-

eration with the Economic Development Board and the Bahrain Exports Center in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism for two consecutive years with a quality stamp approved by Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

29-30 November 2018

Participation of the Health Committee at the Bahrain's 1st Dermatology, Laser and Aesthetic Conference in Bahrain.

7-8 December 2018

Participation of the Health Committee in the Laser and Cosmetics Dentistry Conference and Exhibition. (7-8 December 2018)

25-27 December 2018

The Finance, Insurance and Taxation Committee's initiative to organize a series of awareness raising workshops on the implementation of the value added tax system for nine different sectors including: financial services, real estate and construction, retail and wholesale, both industry and tourism sectors (food and beverage), health, education, transport and insurance.

Laying the foundation for its comprehensive action plan

In 2018, the board of directors laid the foundation for its action plan covering the 29th term. This came following thorough analysis and evaluation of the chamber's internal systems, work mechanism, and its effectiveness in achieving its goals in line with Bahrain's economic Vision 2030. The action plan includes a number of programs and initiatives that are to be pursued within a specific time frame and will be subject to objective evaluation according to internationally recognized standards and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The plan will be exhibited in the next annual report, as it was endorsed by the board at the outset of 2019.

Determining the chamber's values

The board of directors devised and endorsed the chamber's values and ethics in synergy to its vision and mission, and by means that aid the chamber's development march and strengthen its standing as a representative of the private sector and an advocate of its interests.