



**EU-GCC**  
TRADE AND BUSINESS  
COOPERATION FACILITY

Contact: Katerina Belko-Hansen  
Tel. 0045 33773711  
Email: ekbe@di.dk  
Date: 17/05/2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **FIRST EU-GCC HIGH-END LUXURY EVENT SPARKS COLLABORATIONS ACROSS BORDERS**

A strong demand in the fashion industry for knowledge sharing supports collaboration between stakeholders from both regions.

RIYADH - May 17, 2017 – The EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation facility organized the first ever event focusing on EU-GCC high-end luxury goods in Riyadh on May 10-11. The two day event consisted of an expert seminar and master class. It brought together distinguished European and GCC designers, buyers, business professionals, fashion reporters, design specialists and some of the most talented local design students.

The luxury market in the GCC has entered a new phase. A maturing retail sector, slower economic growth and dampened consumer confidence. This presents new challenges to businesses operating in the market. Yet, if businesses can rise to the challenge and enhance their understanding of local consumers' needs the opportunities may greatly exceed the challenges.

“The mainstream fashion industry and the Islamic fashion industry have a lot in common. But there has to be some kind of collaborative spirit. This is what we see at an event as today, where the effort to combine - in collaboration - the immense talent from both sides and see how they can work together to captivate the audience in a more powerful way,” says Alia Khan, founder and chairwoman of Islamic Fashion and Design Council on the interregional cooperation in the fashion industry.

The expert seminar and master class was hosted by L'Art Pur Gallery in Riyadh (KSA). The event fostered EU-GCC fashion collaborations and showcased alternative and unique materials within high-end luxury goods. The masterclass aimed to inspire upcoming designers and entrepreneurs and thereby create closer interregional relations between designers, retailers and entrepreneurs from EU and GCC countries. The high number of female participants and speakers underlined the importance of female entrepreneurship and craftsmanship in this industry. Audience included

business professionals from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and GCC, several European brands, companies and designer. Some highlighted speakers included Islamic Fashion and Design Council, MALNE, KOPENHAGEN FUR, FASHION EXCLUCIVE UAE and others.

“I do believe that building business and cultural relationships with GCC countries is very important for Europe, and with the help of the EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility we could work on this important issue,” says Hungarian jewelry designer Adrien Nagy after attending the high-end luxury goods event.

The expert seminar and masterclass has already sparked new business relations and the planning of future interregional industry collaborations. Building on the success from the first high-end luxury goods event, the EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility will host a follow up event in the GCC-region in the fall, 2017. To stay updated on our future events see [eu-gcc.org](http://eu-gcc.org) or follow the twitter account [@eugcctrade](https://twitter.com/eugcctrade).

### **ABOUT EU-GCC TRADE AND BUSINESS COOPERATION FACILITY:**

The EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility is a three-year project, financed by the EU Commission with the aim at strengthening trade, investment and business cooperation between the EU and the GCC through business networks, mutual understanding and dialogue.

The project is managed by the leading EU and GCC private sector organizations that represent a membership base of over 2.5 million firms: Federation of GCC Chambers, BUSINESSEUROPE, the Confederation of Danish Industry.

