

## Bringing together leaders from Islamic & responsible finance to build bridges and expand impact

- *Responsible Finance & Investment Summit, organized by the RFI Foundation and Swiss Arab Network to bring together senior leaders from responsible investment and Islamic finance on 3 and 4 May 2017 at the Hotel Atlantis by Giardino in Zurich, Switzerland*
- *Responsible finance leaders to discuss metrics to measure the positive and negative impacts its operations generate to expand impact for responsible finance which now represents one-third of managed assets globally*
- *Will promote action to connect Islamic finance - a \$2 trillion industry - with other responsible finance rising in importance at European markets including Switzerland, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Germany and Ireland*



From left to right: RFI Foundation CEO Blake Goud, RFI Foundation Council of Advisors Chairperson Tan Sri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz, Swiss Arab Network Co-Founder and Vice President Slim Habli, RFI Foundation Board of Trustees Chairperson Professor Datuk Rifaat Abdel Karim, RFI Foundation Board of Trustees Deputy Chairman Dr. Sayd Farook

London, United Kingdom and Zurich, Switzerland - November 22, 2016 - Leaders in responsible finance and Islamic finance hold a key responsibility to expand their business outside the traditional bounds of their existing markets. The Responsible Finance & Investment Summit, to be held on 3 and 4 May 2017 in Zurich, Switzerland, will bring together key stakeholders from within responsible finance to build connections that can open up growth opportunities and help translate their actions towards more measurable impact.

The event will provide an opportunity for senior executives involved in responsible finance to discuss current and future opportunities in responsible finance, as well as how Islamic finance fits into the overall market. The summit promotes discussions between a diverse set of responsible finance practitioners, regulators and will develop opportunities for convergence & collaboration between developed & emerging markets, banking & investment firms, and responsible investment & Islamic finance.

Blake Goud, CEO of the Responsible Finance & Investment (RFI) Foundation, commented: "We are excited to announce this Summit for next year with the Swiss Arab Network. In our research and through engagement with many leaders across the industry, we have identified a need to explore in detail how different sectors within responsible finance work together around similar values. In particular, there is a significant need to highlight the role for Islamic finance within broader responsible finance market."

Mr. Goud continued: "The Responsible Finance & Investment Summit will build upon our inaugural event hosted by Bank Negara Malaysia, which brought together about 450 people from across responsible finance, including Islamic finance. We found a strong appetite from participants to find common ground in responsible finance. People working in the financial sector and society at large expect finance to align with their values and in most cases, these values are widely held and often universal."



Mounir Khouzami, Co-Founder and President of the Swiss Arab Network (SAN) highlighted: “After the first ever Islamic finance forum in Switzerland held in Zurich on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016 with 110 people from 15 countries, we are pleased to announce the joint summit with the RFI Foundation on responsible finance.”

Slim Habli, Co-Founder and Vice-President of SAN added: “Our work building bridges between Europe and the Arab World can be enhanced by supporting connections in the financial sector. The responsible investment and Islamic finance industries, being based on a similar set of ethical values, provides an important area for collaboration.” Finally, Biagio Zoccolillo, Executive Director Zurich and Advisor to the Board of SAN pointed out: “Since we started some weeks ago to approach and engage with local and international institutions, we get very positive feedback and realize a strong appetite to partner with us for the summit.”

The organizers of the Summit would like to thank all those who have committed so far to supporting the event, including confirmed sponsorship from Bahrain Economic Development Board, DDCAP Ltd, Eiger Trading Advisors Ltd, Millenium Associates AG and Saudia.

### **About the Responsible Finance & Investment Summit 2017**

The Summit, to be held on 3 and 4 May 2017 at the Atlantis Hotel by Giardino in Zurich, Switzerland, will play a vital role in connecting representatives from across the responsible finance industry to build on the growing cooperation between responsible investment (RI), environmental, social and governance (ESG) and Islamic finance. The RFI Summit in Zurich is an initiative of the RFI Foundation and Swiss Arab Network, two globally active nonprofits institutions seeking to build awareness of shared values that can bring together people from various backgrounds working towards similar goals connected to generating benefits to society.

### **About RFI Foundation**

The RFI Foundation is a non-profit organisation with a mission to identify a neutral, nonpartisan and universal value proposition that encourages convergence of responsible finance practices. RFI evolves Sustainable, Responsible, Impact Investing (SRI), Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and the Islamic finance sectors towards a convergence of their shared standards, and engages stakeholders to build the responsible finance industry as a catalyst to support equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic development. Visit us at [www.rfi-foundation.org](http://www.rfi-foundation.org) or follow us on Twitter @RFIFoundation

### **About Swiss Arab Network**

The Swiss Arab Network (SAN) is a non-profit networking organization with headquarter in Zurich and affiliations in the Arab world that strives to bridge gaps, promote sustainable exchange and intensify the mutual understanding among Swiss and Arab people. SAN is a networking platform and organizes events and gives speeches on topics like Swiss and Arab finance, business, culture, art and film. Established and high-profile organisations from Switzerland and the Arab world are members of the network. Visit us at [www.swissarab.org](http://www.swissarab.org)

### **Media Contacts**

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