



# CIEU's GeoEconomic Summit 2026 – Dubai Edition

Shifting GeoEconomics: Rewiring  
West Asia's Economic Core

## The Inflection Point

### *West Asia in a Decade of Reconfiguration*

West Asia is entering a decisive decade—one that is likely to fundamentally redefine its role in the global economic system. For much of the post-war era, the region's economic identity was anchored in three structural pillars: hydrocarbon wealth, strategic geography, and episodic geopolitical volatility. This model delivered fiscal strength and geopolitical relevance, but it also entrenched dependence on energy cycles and external demand.

Today, that model is being structurally re-engineered.

Across the Gulf, particularly in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, a new economic architecture is emerging—one that seeks to decouple long-term growth from oil dependence while embedding these economies into global value chains. The scale of this transformation is now visible in hard data. In the UAE, non-oil sectors accounted for approximately 77–78 percent of GDP in 2025, with non-oil GDP expanding by 5.7 percent year-on-year, significantly outpacing overall economic growth. This marks a decisive break from the early 2000s, when hydrocarbons dominated fiscal and external balances.

Equally significant is the expansion of trade and capital flows. The UAE's non-oil foreign trade surged by 24.5 percent in 2025, reaching approximately AED 1.7 trillion in just the first half of the year, while foreign direct investment touched AED 167 billion, one of the highest levels globally. These figures underscore not just growth, but structural momentum—driven by logistics, finance, tourism, and digital sectors.

Saudi Arabia's trajectory, anchored in Vision 2030, reflects a parallel transformation. As of 2025, non-oil GDP constitutes approximately 55–56 percent of total GDP, up from nearly 50 percent at the start of the reform cycle. More importantly, non-oil sectors are now driving the bulk of

incremental growth, contributing over 60 percent of GDP expansion in 2025, with real non-oil growth consistently in the 4–5 percent range.

This shift is being financed and accelerated by unprecedented capital deployment. Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund and associated state-led vehicles are anchoring investments across tourism, logistics, advanced manufacturing, and technology, while maintaining foreign asset buffers exceeding \$400 billion, providing macroeconomic stability even amid global volatility.

Beyond national strategies, the region's transformation is reinforced by global macroeconomic conditions. Advanced economies are facing slower growth, elevated debt levels, and structural inflation pressures, limiting policy flexibility. At the same time, global supply chains are being reorganized in response to geopolitical tensions and pandemic-era disruptions.

These dynamics are driving capital toward markets that combine growth potential, regulatory agility, and strategic geography—a combination increasingly associated with West Asia. The region's location at the crossroads of Asia, Europe, and Africa positions it as a natural connector of trade and capital flows, while its financial strength enables sustained investment in future-facing sectors.

The result is a fundamental shift in global perception. West Asia is no longer viewed merely as an energy supplier or a geopolitical hotspot. It is emerging as a central node in the reconfiguration of global economic flows—a region that is not just adapting to globalization, but actively shaping its next phase.

This transition also reflects a deeper evolution in the nature of economic power. Influence is no longer derived solely from resource endowment or market size, but from the ability to mediate and manage flows—of capital, goods, data, and talent. In this emerging paradigm, hubs like Dubai are positioning themselves as system integrators, enabling seamless interaction across regions.

Yet, this transformation is unfolding in a volatile geopolitical environment. The resilience of this new model is now being tested in real time.

## The Shock Factor

### *Conflict and the Acceleration of GeoEconomic Thinking*

The recent conflict involving the United States, Israel, and Iran has introduced a new layer of urgency—and strategic clarity—to West Asia's economic transformation. While geopolitical tensions have long been a feature of the region, the current episode stands out for its direct and immediate economic transmission channels, affecting energy markets, trade routes, and global capital flows simultaneously.

At the centre of this dynamic lies the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly 20 percent of global oil supply is transported. Even limited disruptions or perceived threats in this corridor have historically triggered disproportionate market reactions. In the current context, heightened tensions have once again translated into energy price volatility, with ripple effects across inflation, monetary policy, and fiscal balances globally.

For energy-importing economies such as India and much of Europe, the implications are immediate and quantifiable. Each incremental increase in oil prices feeds directly into import bills, widens current account deficits, and constrains fiscal space. In a global environment already characterized by elevated inflation and tightening financial conditions, such shocks amplify macroeconomic stress.

The impact, however, extends beyond energy markets. The conflict has disrupted key elements of the global trading system, particularly shipping and logistics. Increased security risks in regional waters have driven up freight costs and insurance premiums, adding to supply chain pressures that have yet to fully normalize post-pandemic. Given that a significant share of Asia-Europe trade

passes through West Asian corridors, these disruptions have systemic implications.

Global capital markets have also responded with heightened sensitivity. Periods of escalation have triggered risk-off sentiment, leading to capital outflows from emerging markets and increased volatility in equities and currencies. Investors are increasingly factoring geopolitical risk into asset pricing, reshaping capital allocation patterns at a global scale.

Yet, the most consequential impact of the conflict is not the disruption itself, but the shift in strategic thinking it has catalyzed.

Across governments, corporations, and financial institutions, there is a growing recognition that the global economy has entered an era where geopolitical risk is structural rather than episodic. This realization is accelerating the transition from an efficiency-driven model of globalization to one that prioritizes resilience, redundancy, and strategic autonomy.

Supply chains are being redesigned to incorporate multiple nodes and alternative routes, even at higher cost. Trade partnerships are being reassessed with an emphasis on reliability and political alignment. Financial systems are evolving to account for cross-border risk, with diversification across geographies and asset classes becoming a core strategy.

In this emerging paradigm, geo-economics—the use of economic structures and flows as instruments of strategic influence—has moved to the forefront. Trade corridors, logistics hubs, and financial centres are no longer passive infrastructures; they are active levers of power and stability.

Paradoxically, this environment of heightened uncertainty is also creating a premium for stability-oriented economic hubs. Capital, talent, and enterprise are increasingly gravitating toward jurisdictions that offer regulatory clarity, political neutrality, and operational continuity.

This is where parts of West Asia, particularly the UAE and Dubai, are differentiating themselves. Rather than being defined by regional volatility, they are positioning themselves as anchors of stability within it. Dubai's integrated ecosystem—spanning finance, logistics, and regulation—enables it to function as a shock absorber, ensuring continuity of flow even when traditional systems face disruption.

The current conflict, therefore, is not merely a destabilizing event. It is an accelerant—forcing a re-evaluation of how the global economy is structured and governed. It highlights the vulnerabilities of existing systems while simultaneously elevating the importance of resilient, well-connected economic platforms.

In this context, West Asia's transformation acquires a dual significance. It is both a long-term structural shift and a real-time response to immediate shocks. The intersection of these dynamics is what defines the present moment—and underscores why geo-economic platforms like Dubai are becoming increasingly central to the global system.

## From Efficiency to Resilience

### *The New Logic of Globalisation*

For nearly three decades, globalisation was driven by a singular organising principle: efficiency. Production networks were optimised for cost, supply chains were consolidated to minimise friction, and capital flowed toward locations offering the highest returns with the least resistance. The result was a highly integrated global system—lean, fast, and cost-effective, but also deeply interdependent and, as recent events have shown, inherently fragile.

That model is now undergoing a fundamental recalibration.

The cumulative shocks of the past five years—the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and most recently the U.S.-Israel-Iran tensions—have exposed the vulnerabilities of hyper-

optimised global systems. According to the International Monetary Fund, supply chain disruptions during the pandemic alone reduced global GDP by an estimated 1–1.5 percentage points annually between 2020 and 2022, while subsequent geopolitical tensions have added further layers of uncertainty to trade and capital flows. Similarly, the World Trade Organization has noted a structural slowdown in global trade growth, with projections for 2025–26 indicating sub-3 percent annual expansion, well below the pre-2008 average of nearly 6 percent.

These shifts are not cyclical—they are structural.

Supply chains are being redesigned to incorporate redundancy, diversification, and regionalisation. Companies are increasingly adopting “China+1” and “multi-hub” strategies, distributing production across geographies to mitigate concentration risk. The share of global trade occurring within regional blocs has risen steadily, with intra-Asia and intra-Europe trade gaining prominence as firms seek proximity and predictability.

Trade corridors, in this context, are being reimagined not merely as economic routes but as strategic instruments of resilience and influence. Initiatives such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) reflect a broader shift toward creating multi-nodal connectivity frameworks that can withstand geopolitical disruptions. These corridors are designed not just to move goods, but to embed economic relationships, reduce dependency on single chokepoints, and create alternative pathways for global commerce.

Capital allocation is undergoing a parallel transformation. Investors are increasingly factoring in geopolitical risk, regulatory stability, and operational continuity alongside traditional metrics such as returns and growth. According to recent estimates by global consulting firms, over \$3–4 trillion in capital is expected to be reallocated globally by 2030 as supply chains and investment strategies adjust to the new geopolitical reality. Sovereign wealth funds, pension funds, and

institutional investors are diversifying across regions and asset classes, seeking jurisdictions that offer both resilience and scalability.

In this evolving paradigm, the concept of “flow control” has emerged as a defining feature of geo-economic power. The ability to facilitate, intermediate, and stabilise flows—of capital, goods, data, and talent—has become a critical determinant of influence. Countries and cities that can ensure continuity of these flows, even in periods of disruption, are gaining disproportionate strategic importance.

This marks a shift from a world defined by efficiency-led globalisation to one characterised by resilience-led integration. The new system is more complex, more distributed, and more politically embedded. It prioritises flexibility over optimisation, redundancy over concentration, and strategic alignment over pure cost efficiency.

Within this framework, the role of intermediary hubs—capable of connecting fragmented systems and enabling seamless interaction—becomes central. It is in this context that Dubai’s evolving role acquires particular significance.

## Dubai’s Strategic Positioning

### *From Hub to System Integrator*

Within the emerging geo-economic architecture, Dubai has positioned itself not merely as a participant, but as a system integrator of global economic flows. Its rise reflects a combination of deliberate policy design, institutional innovation, and sustained investment in world-class infrastructure.

At the core of Dubai’s positioning is its financial ecosystem, anchored by the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC). As of 2025, DIFC hosts over 5,500 active firms, including leading global banks, asset managers, insurance companies, and a rapidly expanding fintech ecosystem. The centre has witnessed double-digit annual

growth in new registrations, with fintech and innovation firms alone crossing 800 entities, making it one of the fastest-growing financial clusters globally.

DIFC’s strength lies not only in scale, but in structure. Its independent regulatory framework, based on common law principles, offers a level of legal certainty and transparency that is particularly valuable in an era of geopolitical fragmentation. The presence of specialised courts, arbitration centres, and regulatory bodies enables seamless dispute resolution and cross-border financial operations, reinforcing investor confidence.

Parallel to its financial ecosystem, Dubai’s trade and logistics infrastructure anchors its role as a global connector. DP World’s flagship asset, Jebel Ali Port, remains one of the largest and most connected ports globally, handling over 13 million TEUs annually and linking more than 150 ports across six continents. Combined with Al Maktoum International Airport and Emirates’ global aviation network, Dubai facilitates high-speed movement of goods and people, positioning itself as a critical node in Asia–Europe–Africa supply chains.

What distinguishes Dubai, however, is not the strength of individual sectors, but its ability to integrate multiple layers into a cohesive economic platform.

Finance, logistics, regulation, and innovation are not operating in silos; they are interconnected in a way that enables seamless movement of capital and commerce. A global investor can raise capital within DIFC, deploy it through regional trade networks, manage operations via digital platforms, and resolve disputes within the same ecosystem. This level of integration reduces friction, enhances efficiency, and—critically—ensures continuity even in periods of disruption.

In the current environment of geopolitical uncertainty, this integrated model functions as

a shock absorber. While traditional trade routes and financial systems face stress, Dubai's multi-layered infrastructure allows it to reroute flows, absorb volatility, and maintain operational stability. This capability is increasingly valuable as businesses and investors seek to hedge against systemic risks.

Recent geopolitical tensions have, in fact, reinforced Dubai's attractiveness. As volatility rises in other parts of the world, capital is gravitating toward jurisdictions that offer stability, neutrality, and scalability. The UAE's policy of maintaining open economic engagement across geopolitical divides has positioned Dubai as a trusted intermediary, capable of facilitating transactions and partnerships that might be more difficult elsewhere.

This is reflected in capital inflows and business activity. The UAE continues to rank among the top global recipients of foreign direct investment, while Dubai has seen sustained growth in company registrations, high-net-worth migration, and financial sector expansion. The city's ability to attract talent—from finance and technology to entrepreneurship—further strengthens its role as a global hub.

More fundamentally, Dubai's evolution reflects a broader shift in the nature of economic geography. In an increasingly fragmented world, cities that can operate as neutral, efficient, and globally connected platforms are emerging as central actors. They are not merely facilitators of economic activity; they are architects of the systems that enable it.

Dubai's transition from a regional trading hub to a global system integrator captures this shift. It is not just connecting markets—it is redefining how those connections are structured and sustained.

In a world where disruption is becoming the norm, Dubai's value proposition lies in its ability to provide continuity. It represents a model of economic organisation that is flexible, resilient, and globally integrated, making it a pivotal node in the emerging geo-economic order.

## The India–West Asia Axis

### *A Corridor of Opportunity*

The deepening economic relationship between India and West Asia represents one of the most consequential shifts in the emerging geo-economic landscape. What was once largely an energy-driven engagement has evolved into a multi-dimensional economic partnership, encompassing trade, investment, technology, logistics, and financial integration.

This transformation is most visible in the scale and trajectory of bilateral trade. India–UAE trade crossed \$85–90 billion in FY2024–25, positioning the UAE as India's third-largest trading partner. Since the signing of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in 2022, non-oil trade has expanded rapidly, with both countries targeting \$100 billion in non-oil trade by 2030. The agreement has reduced tariffs on over 80 percent of goods, streamlined customs processes, and enabled deeper integration across sectors such as gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals, food processing, and advanced manufacturing.

Investment flows have followed a similar trajectory. UAE-based sovereign wealth funds and institutional investors have significantly increased their exposure to India's infrastructure, logistics, digital economy, and renewable energy sectors. At the same time, Indian companies are expanding their footprint across the Gulf, particularly in services, construction, technology, and financial intermediation. This bidirectional flow of capital reflects a growing level of strategic interdependence.

The proposed India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) has the potential to elevate this partnership to a new structural level. Envisioned as a multi-modal connectivity network integrating ports, railways, logistics hubs, and digital infrastructure, IMEC seeks to create a seamless trade route linking India to Europe via the Gulf. Early estimates suggest that the corridor could reduce transit times between India and Europe by 30–40 percent, while lowering logistics

costs through improved efficiency and multimodal integration.

More importantly, IMEC represents a shift in how trade corridors are conceptualised. It is not merely an infrastructure project, but a geo-economic architecture—designed to enhance resilience, diversify routes, and embed long-term economic linkages across regions. In a world where traditional chokepoints such as the Suez Canal and the Strait of Hormuz are increasingly vulnerable to disruption, such corridors provide critical redundancy.

The underlying strength of the India–West Asia axis lies in its structural complementarity. India offers scale, a rapidly expanding consumer market, a deep pool of skilled talent, and growing capabilities in technology and manufacturing. West Asia, particularly the Gulf, provides capital, world-class infrastructure, and unparalleled connectivity across continents. Together, they form a high-synergy economic system, capable of driving growth across multiple sectors.

The Indian diaspora adds a unique dimension to this relationship. With over 3.5 million Indians residing in the UAE and nearly 9 million across the Gulf, this community acts as a living bridge—facilitating trade, enabling investment, and strengthening institutional trust. Remittance flows from the Gulf to India alone exceed \$40 billion annually, underscoring the depth of economic integration.

In the context of ongoing global disruptions, the strategic importance of this corridor is further amplified. It offers an alternative to traditional trade routes, reduces exposure to geopolitical risk, and provides a framework for collaborative growth anchored in resilience and diversification. As global supply chains are reconfigured, the India–West Asia axis is well-positioned to emerge as a central pillar of the new economic geography.

## Financial Systems in Transition

### *Capital, Banking, and Digital Flows*

The financial dimension of geo-economics is undergoing a profound transformation, shaped by the dual forces of global integration and geopolitical fragmentation. Capital markets today are more interconnected than ever before, yet increasingly sensitive to risk, volatility, and policy divergence.

Global investors are recalibrating their strategies, balancing the pursuit of returns with the need for resilience. This has led to a diversification of capital across geographies, asset classes, and currencies, with a growing emphasis on emerging hubs that offer both stability and scalability. West Asia has emerged as a key beneficiary of this shift.

At the centre of this transformation is the rise of sovereign wealth funds and alternative investment platforms. The Gulf region collectively manages sovereign assets exceeding \$4 trillion, with the UAE alone accounting for over \$1.5 trillion through entities such as Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), Mubadala, and Investment Corporation of Dubai. These funds are no longer passive investors; they are active allocators of global capital, shaping investment trends across technology, infrastructure, energy transition, and healthcare.

Private capital is also playing an increasingly important role. Private equity, venture capital, and family offices are expanding their presence in the region, attracted by regulatory reforms, tax efficiencies, and access to high-growth markets. Dubai, in particular, has seen a surge in hedge fund and asset management activity, with dozens of global firms establishing or expanding their regional headquarters.

Banking systems are evolving in parallel. Regional banks are strengthening their balance sheets,

expanding cross-border operations, and investing in digital capabilities. There is a growing emphasis on liquidity resilience, risk diversification, and regulatory compliance, reflecting lessons from recent global financial disruptions. At the same time, international banks are deepening their engagement with the Gulf, recognizing its growing importance in global capital flows.

Perhaps the most transformative shift, however, is occurring in the domain of digital finance. The convergence of technology and finance is reshaping how transactions are conducted, assets are managed, and risks are assessed. Fintech platforms are enabling faster, cheaper, and more inclusive financial services, while blockchain-based systems are introducing new models of trust and transparency.

Central banks are also exploring the potential of digital currencies, with pilot projects and cross-border payment initiatives gaining momentum. These developments have the potential to significantly reduce transaction costs, enhance efficiency, and improve the resilience of financial systems.

Dubai has positioned itself at the forefront of this transformation. Through regulatory sandboxes, innovation hubs, and forward-looking policy frameworks, it has created an environment conducive to experimentation and growth. The Dubai International Financial Centre has emerged as a leading fintech hub, attracting startups, investors, and global technology firms.

In this evolving landscape, financial systems are no longer just intermediaries—they are critical infrastructure for geo-economic power. The ability to mobilise, allocate, and manage capital across borders is becoming a key determinant of influence. West Asia, with its financial depth and institutional innovation, is increasingly central to this process.

## Cities as Economic Actors

### *The Rise of Urban GeoEconomics*

One of the most significant structural shifts in the global system is the rising prominence of cities as primary economic actors. In an increasingly interconnected yet fragmented world, economic power is no longer concentrated solely at the national level. Instead, it is being distributed across urban centres that function as hubs of capital, innovation, and connectivity.

Cities today are not merely administrative units; they are platforms for economic aggregation and global interaction. They attract capital, host talent, and enable the flow of goods and services across borders. In many cases, they operate with a degree of autonomy and agility that allows them to respond more effectively to global trends than nation-states.

Dubai represents one of the most advanced examples of this urban geo-economic model. Its ability to attract multinational corporations, financial institutions, entrepreneurs, and skilled professionals has created a dynamic ecosystem that transcends traditional boundaries. The city hosts over 300,000 active companies, spanning sectors from finance and logistics to technology and tourism, making it one of the most diversified urban economies globally.

Policy innovation has been central to this success. Dubai's approach to taxation, foreign ownership, residency, and business regulation has created a highly competitive environment for global talent and enterprise. Initiatives such as long-term residency visas, full foreign ownership in key sectors, and streamlined licensing processes have significantly enhanced its attractiveness.

Equally important is the city's investment in infrastructure and quality of life. World-class

transport systems, digital connectivity, and urban amenities have positioned Dubai as a preferred destination for both businesses and individuals. This combination of economic opportunity and lifestyle appeal has driven sustained inflows of high-net-worth individuals, entrepreneurs, and professionals.

In a fragmented global environment, cities like Dubai offer something increasingly valuable: neutral, efficient, and globally connected platforms. They provide a space where capital can be deployed, businesses can operate, and partnerships can be formed without being constrained by broader geopolitical tensions.

This urban-centric model is likely to play an increasingly important role in shaping the future of global economic flows. As supply chains become more distributed and capital more mobile, cities that can integrate finance, logistics, and innovation into a cohesive system will emerge as key nodes in the global network.

Dubai's evolution from a regional trading hub to a global economic platform underscores this shift. It is not just participating in the global economy—it is helping to define the architecture through which that economy operates.

## Strategic Questions and the Role of the Summit

Against the backdrop of accelerating geo-economic shifts, the CIEU GeoEconomic Summit 2026 – Dubai Edition is positioned as a platform to engage with a set of first-order strategic questions that will shape the next decade of global economic organisation. At its core, the summit seeks to interrogate how the global system is being rewired. What will define the next generation of trade corridors, and how will initiatives such as IMEC alter the geography of global commerce? How will financial systems evolve in a world where capital is both more mobile and more risk-sensitive? What role will cities and financial centres play as intermediaries of global flows? And how will emerging technologies—from digital finance to data

infrastructure—reshape the movement of capital, goods, and services across borders?

These are not abstract questions. They sit at the intersection of policy, capital, and execution, and their answers will determine how economies position themselves in an increasingly fragmented yet interconnected world.

The summit is therefore designed not as a conventional conference, but as a strategic convening. It brings together policymakers shaping regulatory and economic frameworks, business leaders driving operational and investment decisions, financial institutions allocating capital, and thought leaders interpreting global trends. This multi-stakeholder architecture is critical. In a geo-economic environment, outcomes are rarely determined by a single actor; they emerge from the alignment—or misalignment—of multiple systems.

By fostering structured dialogue across these constituencies, the summit aims to generate insights that are both analytically rigorous and operationally relevant. The emphasis is on moving beyond diagnosis toward direction-setting—identifying pathways through which governments, institutions, and markets can respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

## Expected Outcomes

The value of the summit lies not only in the conversations it enables, but in the tangible outcomes it seeks to deliver. At a strategic level, the summit will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of West Asia's evolving role in the global economy. It will frame the region not as a passive participant in global shifts, but as an active architect of new economic pathways, particularly in areas such as trade corridors, financial intermediation, and digital integration.

For policymakers, the discussions are expected to yield actionable insights on strengthening economic partnerships, particularly within the India-UAE corridor. This includes identifying regulatory alignments, investment facilitation

mechanisms, and sector-specific opportunities that can accelerate bilateral and regional cooperation.

For investors and businesses, the summit will serve as a platform to identify emerging opportunities in a rapidly changing landscape. As capital is reallocated globally, clarity on sectors, geographies, and partnership models becomes critical. The summit's focus on real-economy linkages—spanning infrastructure, logistics, finance, and technology—ensures that these opportunities are grounded in structural trends rather than short-term cycles.

Equally important is the institutional outcome. The summit is designed to establish the CIEU GeoEconomic Dialogue as a recurring platform that tracks and interprets ongoing shifts in the global economic system. In doing so, it aims to create continuity in engagement, enabling stakeholders to revisit, refine, and operationalise ideas over time. In essence, the summit seeks to move from conversation to calibration, and from calibration to collaboration.

## Continuity in a Discontinuous World

The current phase of global transformation is defined by paradox. The world is more interconnected than ever before, yet increasingly fragmented. Supply chains span continents, yet are vulnerable to disruption. Capital flows are global, yet constrained by geopolitical risk. Technology enables seamless connectivity, yet

introduces new forms of competition and control. This is a discontinuous world, one in which linear assumptions no longer hold, and where shocks can rapidly reshape economic realities.

Within this environment, the ability to ensure continuity becomes a defining capability. Continuity of trade, of capital flows, of financial systems, and of institutional trust. Regions and cities that can provide this continuity—while remaining open, adaptive, and forward-looking—will emerge as central actors in the new global order. West Asia, and particularly Dubai, is increasingly positioned within this category. By combining macroeconomic stability with policy agility, and global connectivity with institutional innovation, the region is not merely responding to change, it is actively shaping the frameworks through which change is managed.

Dubai's evolution from a regional hub to a global system integrator encapsulates this shift. It represents a model of economic organisation that is resilient by design, scalable in execution, and neutral in positioning—qualities that are becoming indispensable in an era of uncertainty. The CIEU GeoEconomic Summit 2026 - Dubai Edition is an effort to capture and contribute to this moment of transition. It brings together those who are not just adapting to a changing world, but engineering its next phase, designing systems, corridors, and institutions that can sustain growth and stability in the face of disruption. In doing so, the summit is not only a reflection of the changing geo-economic landscape, it is an instrument for shaping it.

# CIEU's GeoEconomic Summit 2026–Dubai Edition

Shifting GeoEconomics: Rewiring West Asia's Economic Core  
In Partnership with: Institute of Chartered Accountants of India

**Time:**

2:30 PM – 7:30 PM | Followed by Dinner

**Date:**

May 9, 2026

**Venue:**

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Oud Metha, Healthcare City, Dubai



2:00 – 2:30 PM

REGISTRATION & NETWORKING TEA

2:30 – 2:40 PM

SECRETARY ADDRESS AND PLAYING OF NATIONAL ANTHEMS

2:40 – 2:50 PM

CHAIRMAN ADDRESS

2:50 – 3:30 PM

LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE: STABILITY, STRATEGY & THE NEW WORLD ORDER



**Meenakshi Lekhi**

Former Minister of State for External Affairs,  
Government of India



**Mohamed Nasheed**

Former President of the Maldives

3:30 – 4:10 PM

GEOECONOMICS IN TRANSITION: POWER, PERCEPTION & RISK REPRICING



**Adelle Nazarian**

US-based Goeconomist



**Dr. Ausaf Sayeed**

Former Secretary,  
Ministry of External Affairs,  
Government of India



**Jean-Luc Schaffhauser**

Former Member of the  
European Parliament



**Amjad Taha**

Expert in Strategic and Political Affairs  
(Middle East)

4:10 – 4:30 PM

**SPECIAL CONVERSATION: SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE  
ACTION IN THE EMERGING GEOECONOMIC ORDER**



**H.E. Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al Kindi**  
Former UAE's Minister of Environment and Water

4:30 – 4:45 PM

**URBAN GROWTH SPOTLIGHT: CITIES AS ECONOMIC  
POWERHOUSES**



**Ankur Agarwal**  
Chairman and Co-Founder, BNW Developments

4:45 – 5:25 PM

**GEOECONOMIC ARCHITECTURE: THE NEW LOGIC OF  
GLOBAL CAPITAL**



**Ahmed El Safty**  
Economic Advisor, Emirates Center for  
Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR)



**Amb. Bala Bhaskar**  
IFS, Former Ambassador



**Siddharth Balachandran**  
President IBPC and Executive  
Chairman, Buimerc Corporation

5:25 – 5:50 PM

## CAPITAL MARKETS IN TRANSITION: RISK, RETURNS & REALLOCATION



**Pankaj Gupta**  
Co-founder, Gulf Islamic Investments (GII), Dubai



**Riyad Alhoraibi**  
CEO and Co-Founder, ASAS Capital, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



**Saurabh Mukherjea**  
Founder, Marcellus Investment Managers, Mumbai



**Faisal Hasan**  
Al Mal Capital, Dubai



**Gopal Krishna Agarwal**  
Founder, Vogue Commercial & National Spokesperson on Economic Affairs, BJP, Delhi, India

5:50 – 6:15 PM

## BANKING IN TRANSITION: CREDIT, LIQUIDITY & THE NEW GLOBAL ORDER



**Surender Jain**  
Seasoned Banking and Financial Services Professional across Gulf and Indian Financial Sectors



**R Seetharaman**  
ex-CEO, Doha Bank, Qatar



**Manpreet Gill**  
Chief Investment Officer for AME, Standard Chartered, Dubai

6:15 – 7:00 PM

**STRATEGIC GEOECONOMICS & GLOBAL GOVERNANCE  
DIALOGUE**



**Edouard Husson**  
French Historian and  
Geopolitical Thinker, Paris



**Amb. Anil Kumar Trigunayat**  
Former Secretary, MEA and Former Ambassador of  
India to Amman, Libya and Malta

7:00 – 7:30 PM

**INNOVATION AS STRATEGY: TECHNOLOGY,  
INFRASTRUCTURE & THE NEW GEOECONOMIC ORDER**



**Dr. Essa Mohammed Bastaki**  
The President of the  
University of Dubai



**Gleb Borukhov**  
MD, Realia Capital Group

7:30 – 7:40 PM

**CLOSING REMARKS**



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