

EXCLUSIVE

Cyprus Sees Bahrain as a Key Trade Hub

Shipping, technology and marine research offer opportunities

● Bahrain can connect GCC businesses with the EU market.

● Cyprus seeks deeper trade and investment ties with Bahrain.

● Shipping and marine technology are key areas for cooperation.

TDT | Manama
Ashen Tharaka

Bahrain has the potential to become a key hub connecting businesses and investors from the GCC and Europe, Stavros Stavrou, Chairman of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told The Daily Tribune in an exclusive interview.

Stavrou said Cyprus is ready to support stronger business links with Bahrain and help GCC companies seeking opportunities in the European market.

The comments came during a follow-up Cyprus delegation visit to Bahrain after a presidential visit in January. Stavrou said the two countries have a relationship spanning decades, but business interaction had slowed and now needs to be brought back to its previous level.

Turning relations into business

Stavrou said the Cyprus Chamber and Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry have agreed to



President of the Republic of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides, met with HM King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa at the Gudaibiya Palace in January 2026



Industry Minister Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro met Cyprus Deputy Minister of Shipping Marina Hadjimanolis in Manama to discuss strengthening Bahrain-Cyprus cooperation in industry, trade and other areas of mutual interest yesterday.

establish a working team to identify and prioritise sectors where businesses can cooperate.

The aim is to bring companies and entrepreneurs together and help them identify practical opportunities, including partnerships and joint ventures.

He stressed that the focus should be on long-term, sustainable business relationships rather than short-term trade opportunities.

“We do not want MOUs that end up in drawers and nothing happens afterwards,” Stavrou said, stressing

“The real objective is to turn agreements into concrete projects and results.”

STAVROS STAVROU, CHAIRMAN, CYPRUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

that agreements must be followed by concrete projects and results.

Shipping and marine research

Shipping was a major focus during meetings with Bahraini officials, with Stavrou highlighting Cyprus’ experience as a shipping hub.

He also pointed to opportunities in marine research through Cyprus’ CMMI centre of excellence, which works on areas including shipping, marine environmental protection, underwater archaeology and other sea-related fields.

EU-GCC Trade at a Glance	
€165.6bn	Total EU-GCC trade in 2025
€110bn	EU exports to the GCC
€55.6bn	EU imports from the GCC
€84.4bn	EU-GCC services trade in 2024
-30%	Growth in goods trade over the past decade
75%+	Share of EU imports from the GCC made up of fuels
~60 million	Combined GCC population
Almost one-third	Share of the world’s oil reserves held by the Gulf region

Stavrou said Cyprus is interested in sharing this expertise with Bahrain and exploring joint research projects.

The institute has also developed products including artificial reefs and autonomous electric boats for rescue and monitoring operations.

Gateway to Europe

Looking ahead to the EU-GCC summit in October, Stavrou said closer economic relations between the two regions could create significant opportunities.

He said Cyprus, as an EU member state with longstanding links to the Gulf, can help GCC companies expand into the European market.

He also stressed the need to look beyond traditional sectors such as construction and trade, pointing to growing opportunities in technology, financial services, shipping and other sectors.

“We need to identify these areas and see who can complement each other and work together to provide winning situations,” Stavrou said.

Bahrain Airshow Dates Shifted to 2028

Organisers aim to strengthen global participation and expand business, trade and partnership opportunities



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The eighth edition of the Bahrain International Airshow has been re-scheduled to November 2028. Organisers are seeking to create greater opportunities for international participation and engagement across the global aerospace industry.

The Supreme Organising Committee announced that the event, originally scheduled for November 18–20, 2026, at Sakhir Air Base, will now be held from November 15–17, 2028.

The revised dates are expected to provide visitors, exhibitors, delegations and industry partners with greater opportunities to participate in the event and benefit from its business, trade and networking opportunities.

The Supreme Organising

Committee said preparations for the eighth edition are continuing in coordination with stakeholders, partners and members of the international aerospace community.

The Committee said the 2028 edition will further strengthen the airshow’s role in fostering international partnerships, supporting business and trade opportunities, and enhancing Bahrain’s position as a destination for major specialised international events.

It added that preparations are focused on creating the right conditions to attract broad international participation and further strengthen the presence of the global aviation and aerospace community in the Kingdom.

The Bahrain International Airshow was launched in 2010 and has since established itself as a major event on the international aerospace calendar.

Plan to Track Bahrain’s Old Trees

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Mohammed Darwish

An ambitious plan to number, log and track Bahrain’s mature and rare trees has been put forward to stop them from being needlessly cut down or lost to housing and development schemes.

Northern Municipal Council vice chair Zaina Jassim wants a legal and administrative system to record the trees, track their condition and govern any move or removal.

Her proposal also calls for a specialist committee to assess trees and decide their fate.

“Mature and rare trees carry great environmental, social and



A mature ghaf tree, one of Bahrain's hardy native species

historical value,’ Ms Jassim told The Daily Tribune. ‘They also have a strong link to the memory of successive generations, which calls for an integrated framework to protect and document them.’

Each tree would receive its own number and record, including de-

tails like species, size, age and location.

Ms Jassim said the system would make it easier to move trees where needed, particularly on sites earmarked for housing or other development, while protecting those of environmental or heritage value.



“Every mature tree is part of Bahrain’s environmental and cultural heritage.”

– ZAINA JASSIM, NORTHERN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL VICE CHAIR

‘Numbering and documenting the trees will give us a full statistical database of their numbers, types, sizes, ages and locations,’ she said.

The records could then be used for regular counts, checks on tree health and necessary maintenance.

Bahrain is home to trees with strong environmental or heritage value, including ghaf, sidr, tamarisk and grey mangrove. The best-known example is the centuries-old Tree of Life in Sakhir, while mangroves are an important part of the kingdom’s coastal habitat.

Ms Jassim also called for an electronic system covering trees across Bahrain, giving authorities a clear record before any tree is cut down or moved.

She said such a system would provide greater control over those decisions and allow the data to feed into future environ-

mental and development plans.

The proposal follows an earlier move by Ms Jassim to encourage tree planting outside new homes and buildings.

That plan called for a voluntary planting condition to be added to building permits of different kinds.

Owners would be encouraged to plant outside their property boundary where space allows, provided trees do not encroach on road reserves, neighbouring land or pose a risk to traffic.

The measure was aimed at putting more trees around homes and buildings, improving streets, cutting pollution and giving wildlife greater room to thrive.

No service for double-parkers

Proposal would make eateries turn away drivers who block roads while waiting for orders

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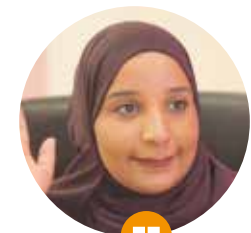
Drivers who double-park outside restaurants and cafés could be denied their food and drinks under a proposal aimed at easing night-time congestion in Muharraq.

Saleh Buhazza, Vice-Chairman of Muharraq Municipal Council, called for businesses to stop serving customers who leave their vehicles in prohibited areas while waiting for takeaway orders.

The proposal mainly targets busy tea shops, grills and restaurants where staff deliver orders to customers waiting in their cars. Councillors say the practice encourages motorists to stop in a second row or obstruct



Galali Avenue



“Double-parking is creating serious congestion.”

– DALAL AL MOQAHWI, MUHARRAQ MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEMBER

parts of the road.

Mr Buhazza said businesses should share responsibility for parking-related congestion, adding that those continuing to serve wrongly parked customers could



“Congestion runs from sunset until dawn.”

SALEH BUHAZZA, VICE-CHAIRMAN OF MUHARRAQ MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

face fines or licensing action.

“When congestion starts, it runs from sunset until dawn,” he said. “We want a decision saying that anyone who parks wrongly in the street should not be served.”

He cited similar measures used elsewhere in the Gulf

and said Bahrain could adopt a comparable approach, placing greater responsibility on businesses instead of relying solely on traffic patrols.

The proposal came as Muharraq Municipal Council reaffirmed its call for flexible plastic bollards in Galali, where double-parking has been reported near restaurants.

Councillor Dalal Al Maqahwi said the problem was particularly serious along Galali Avenue in Block 254, where vehicles frequently stop in a second row. She said bollards could discourage motorists from leaving their cars there.

She also linked improper parking to reduced visibility

for drivers and pedestrians, increasing the risk of accidents, while residents have complained about congestion and constant car horns.

“We need a strict law to stop this random parking,” she said.

However, the General Directorate of Traffic said its traffic engineering branch found that plastic bollards would not address the misuse of the road or wrongful parking. Traffic patrols have instead been instructed to monitor the area at different times and record violations.

Muharraq Council chairman Abdulaziz Al Naar also called for other problem areas to be identified so similar measures could be considered.