



March 2020

# CTNCi

TRUST IS OUR CORE COMPETENCE...

#### CTNCI ACTIVITIES :

- The context of Covid-19: Teleworking: CTNCI is operational
- Video of CTNCI 30th Anniversary which was celebrated on 19-02-2020 is posted on our website: [Click here to view](#)
- Enhancing our Chamber's presence in Bizerte and Le Kef

TUNESISCHE CHAMBRE  
NEDERLANDSE KAMER TUNISO-NÉERLANDAISE  
VAN KOOPHANDEL EN POUR LE COMMERCE  
INDUSTRIE ET L'INDUSTRIE

الغرفة التونسية الهولندية للتجارة والصناعة

## NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2020

OPINION  
COLUMN OF  
OUR HONORARY  
MEMBERS



Pr. Hassen A. Gharbi



COVID-19  
CORONAVIRUS

# LET'S ALL WEAR OUR MASKS !



CHAMBRE TUNISO-NEERLANDAISE POUR LE COMMERCE ET L'INDUSTRIE  
PARMI NOS NOUVELLES FORMULES DE  
MEMBERSHIP





## SUMMARY

- Activities
- Cooperation
- Honorary Members
- Companies of the Month
- Membership
- CTNCI Library

# Program of activities 1st quarter of 2020

## Mission n°1 :

- Measures boosting the development of commercial exchanges between our two countries:
- Note to our Members and Friends
- A joint initiative of CTNCI and ATGF: socio-economic impact of the CORONAVIRUS crisis
- Article on the concept of telecommuting and business continuity in the current health context - Covid -19
- Follow-up visit to Bizerte
- Enhancing our Chamber's presence in Kef
- 2nd meeting with a Representative of the Indonesian Embassy
- Signing an Agreement with NABC
- Interventions in favor of our members

## Mission n°2 :

Providing useful support to companies with the competent Authorities. (networking, assisting in addressing their queries and giving them coaching when getting in contact with their counterparts, relevant authorities, the Directorate General of Customs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Industry and SMEs, the Agency of the Promotion of Industry and Innovation (APII), the National Social Security Fund (CNSS), Central Bank of Tunisia (BCT), Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), the Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce and Crafts (UTICA), Ministry of Social Affairs, National Health Insurance Fund (CNAM), Confederation of Corporate Citizens in Tunisia (CONNECT), Governorates of Bizerte, Kasserine, Siliana, Tunisian Company for Foreign Trade Insurance (COTUNACE) etc....

## Mission n°3 :

- Pull their weight in the economic debate and in the exchanges between the two countries by spearheading proposals ("think tank").
- Increase the visibility of Tunisia particularly in the Netherlands and suggest solutions to the wide range of questions concerning access to the Dutch market.
- Holding brainstorming and information sharing sessions.
- Provide information of high quality.

## Mission n°4 :

Engage members/potential members of our Chamber to actively take part in major events, conferences, forums, exhibitions, seminars that are held in Tunisia and in the Netherlands (reinforce research work, internet).

## ACTIVITIES



# To our members and friends



*Dear Members and Friends of our Chamber,*

*First of all, we can only express our deepest gratitude to the Healthcare workers, Local Communities and Governments around the World for working on the front line to contain this scourge and we ask you in turn to take the necessary precautions to ensure a safe stay wherever you are in the World. In these turbulent times, our hearts go out to everyone and our thoughts are with those who have been affected by this disease.*

*We are all responding to the unprecedented challenge of Coronavirus (COVID-19). The health and well-being of our members, citizens and businesses and their safety regardless of where they live, reside and work, is for us an absolute priority.*

*We respect and support the draconian measures taken by our leaders to fight and control the spread of this pandemic. Compliance with domestic laws, decrees and guidelines is an integral part of our core values.*

*However, in keeping with our mission, we continue to assist you and provide you with relevant and timely information to help you navigate through these turbulent times.*

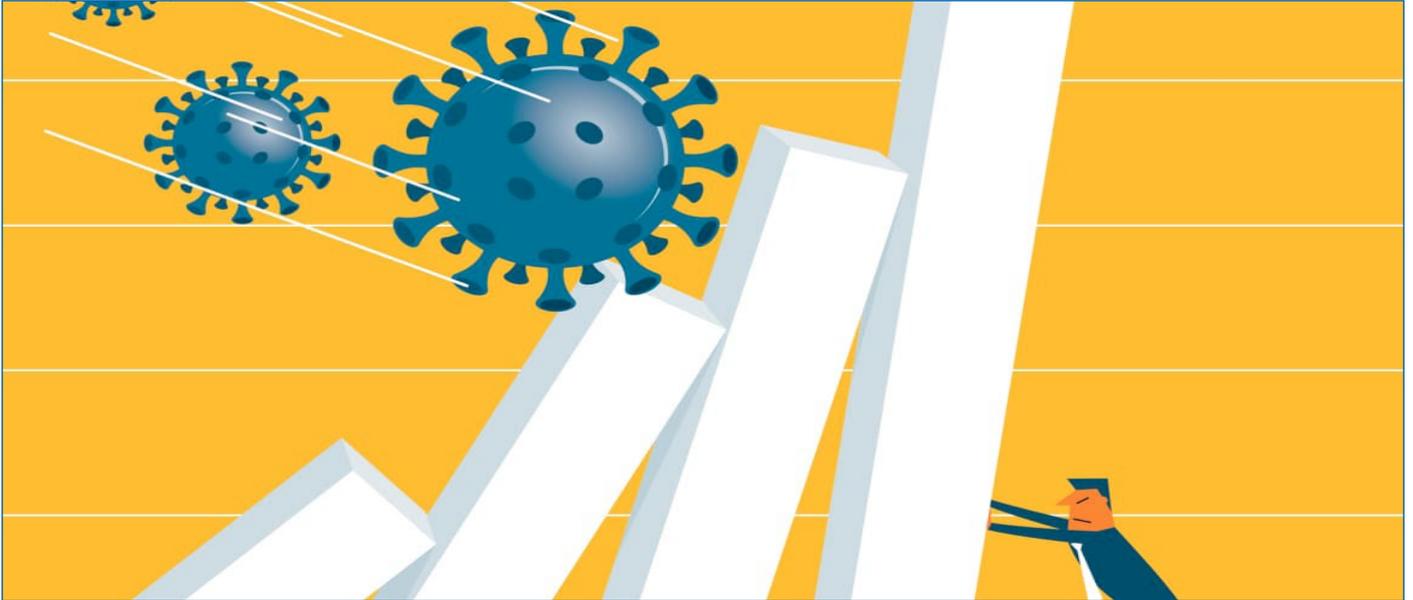
*On behalf of our members, the Steering Committee and our small team, we look forward to assisting you and will do our best to help you get through this delicate period with a positive sense of possibility for the future.*

*Remember to wash your hands, stay confined, respect social distancing, avoid mass gatherings and strictly comply with health and safety rules.*

*Be careful, take care of yourself and your family and stay safe.*



*Editorial*



## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) : A SURVEY OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN RESPONSE TO COVID -19



### COVID-19: A SURVEY OF PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts (UTICA), in cooperation with The Tunisian Hotel Federation (FTH), the Arab institute of heads of companies (IACE), the Tunisian Federation of Insurance Companies (FTUSA), the Center for Young Entrepreneurs (CJD) and the Council of Joint Chambers, completed on April 9, 2020 a first enumeration form of the various contributions of the private sector to fight against the coronavirus pandemic. This survey aims to highlight the different forms of private sector involvement, in terms of direct support to hospitals and medical staff, innovation and technological support, job keeping and food aid as well as financial donations. In order to identify and value these contributions, a form was filled in by 213 representatives of companies, sectors and groups

of companies. The value of in-kind and/or financial contributions was indicated by each respondent. The following summary sheds light on the diverse forms of contributions made by those who responded to the survey. Few businesses have made either in-kind or financial contributions.

### SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY RESULTS:

**37.6% of undertakings surveyed purchased equipment, supplies and medicines for hospitals.**

Many companies have directly supported hospitals and health workers. Notable examples include the financial coverage of 400,000 screening tests provided for free. By collecting the responses of several participants, more than 250,000 masks were thus supplied, imported or produced locally. The same goes for jumpsuits and white coats. Some companies are notably transforming diving masks

into respirators using an Italian patent provided by the Tunisian-Italian Chamber of Commerce. Several ambulances were provided, as well as respirators and RT-PCR devices and surveillance monitors. Hand sanitizers and hygiene products have also been distributed to health workers as well as law enforcement agents.

The pharmaceutical industry has been successfully mobilized so as to avoid any medicine shortage despite the high demand for storage on the one hand and international logistical disruptions relating to the availability of active ingredients on the other. The industrialists in the sector have committed themselves to large donations of medicines for the benefit of hospitals and through the National Donation Commission following a concerted initiative for an amount to date of 2.4 million dinars. Some manufacturers have adapted their



production lines to manufacture large quantities of alcoholic-based solutions and gels. Other manufacturers have successfully implemented the development and production of medicines based on hydroxychloroquine (HCQ), to get ready to cover high demand. Treatment with azithromycin, a supplement to HCQ, has already been made available to the Ministry of Health free of charge. It should also be noted that the adjustment initiative of the textile industry allowing it to produce category 1 of masks of up to 1 million masks per day. These washable «barrier» masks will be produced at a capped price based on a set of specifications in order to provide the population with efficient protective face masks at low cost, in preparation for the lifting of the public lockdown.

The examples are numerous, and demonstrate the strong bond created between companies and

hospitals, either directly or through civil society organizations.

### **15% of polled companies reported having provided technological and digital support**

Examples range from equipping 100 ambulances with tablets and GPS navigators, which are connected to the crisis unit operating under the Ministry of Health, itself equipped with computers and software granted by the same companies. It is to be noted that several digital companies have put resources of development engineering and consulting at the disposal of the Ministry of Health and the Government along with call centers staffed with Covid-19 diagnostic hotlines, or the ongoing Sharek initiative that aims to equip students from modest income families with

computers and connections allowing them access to e-learning. The solutions made available also include Covid-19 online diagnostic platforms, remote monitoring systems for resuscitation rooms, and platforms for real-time identification of available beds to optimize the hospitalization of identified patients. Among the digital innovations, a platform for tracking and geolocation of quarantine facilities to trace potential locations and contacts. Several solutions have also been developed for online purchases and services made available to

citizens.

Solutions combined with training on conducting teleworking have also been provided by many companies, to speed up the necessary adaptation of our operations. Repairs of defective ventilators in hospitals are carried out by specialized companies but also initiatives for the manufacture of protective safety equipment and respirators are launched. Several dozen proposals for technological and digital innovations are made by digital startups and companies to the ministries of Health, Social Affairs, Education and the Interior, either directly or through Hackatons (competitions) organized by several actors. The technological and digital upgrading made possible by the commitment of companies has thus enabled a qualitative and effective leap forward in public management of the epidemic and its consequences.

### 13% of the surveyed companies provided health and local infrastructure for quarantine facilities.

3,037 hotel rooms are made available by the hospitality sector, of which 1,014 are already booked and 2,023 in their way, in most regions, on a voluntary basis and free of charge. These rooms are used both for the confined and for the medical personnel on the front line of this epidemic. The initiatives are diverse in terms of type and magnitude: we will note for example several dry-cleaners and laundries which sanitize the jumpsuits of our medical staff that match up to the standards required and free of charge. The private sector has also made it possible to enhance the existing capacity and infrastructure of hospitals, in particular by the construction in 15 days of new additions to hospitals as Covid-19 designated centers or for the admission of patients. Several private clinics have also discussed the provision of resuscitation beds and hospital beds.

### 40.4% provided food support.

Many companies have participated in joint operations of food baskets. These companies have provided additional social assistance and support either to the Tunisian Union of Social Solidarity or directly to charities or their employees. These initiatives have taken place in most regions. Note for example Sfax where more than 10,000 food baskets have been supplied, in a partnership between UTICA Sfax, Rotary, on the initiative of business leaders. In total, it is well over 120 thousand food baskets were provided to the poor, some under way and the remaining is scheduled in particular for the sacred month of Ramadan, according to the survey responses.

### 45.5% of the polled companies and sectors made a direct donation to the 1818 fund.

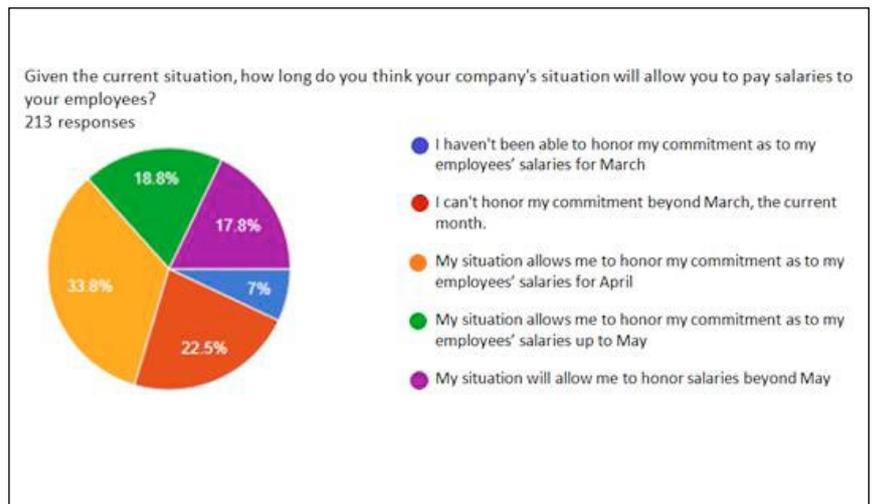
Financial contributions have been sent to various organizations: associations, town halls, organizations and federations, hospitals, etc. 45.5% of companies also supported the 1818 initiative, often in addition to other types of action.

### Estimated value of contributions :

The survey asked each respondent to estimate

the value of contributions made, be it for digital upgrades, the purchase of equipment, food supply and direct financial support. Among the 213 respondents, the total of these contributions being reported amounts to 114 million and 677 thousand dinars. It should be pointed out that the contributions of three private banks, which completed this survey, are included in this overall figure.

### The ability to keep employees' salaries :



In total, 93% of the polled companies through the 213 representatives were able to pay salaries to the employees for March. Of all respondents, 70.5% say they will be able to pay full wages for April, 36.6% will be able to honor their commitment for May salaries, and only 17.8% say they will be able to do that beyond the month of May given their situation. It should be noted that this survey was targeting companies, often of medium and large sized enterprises, which have supported the fight against the covid-19 outbreak, and does not take into account the situation of VSEs, individual companies which make up the core of the economic fabric. Nevertheless, the strong downward trend on this point is clear, and demonstrates that April is a pivotal month for the resilience of businesses in the face of the crisis and a very high risk for employment, in particular.

### Anticipations of the crisis impact on the economic fabric :

Regarding the prospects and the impact of the crisis on the economic fabric, 15% of those surveyed believe that there will be some damage, though limited, anticipating that the majority of the economic fabric will survive until such time when

Given the current national and global context, how will you anticipate the resilience of the national economic fabric, taking into account the accompanying measures announced?  
213 responses

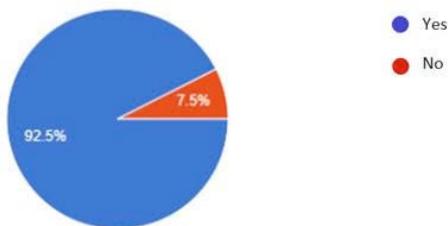


the button of reset is ready to press. 13.1% believe that there will be a high mortality and bankruptcy rate within the economic fabric.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (67.6%) indicate that too many sectors will be affected and that we are facing a major systemic and social risk. The response to the question related to our capacity for resilience in spite of the announced support measures, when linked to the observed trend in the capacity to maintain the payment of wages, further sheds light on the size of the shocks hitting the economy and the

extent of the measures to be proposed and the adjustments to be made within our sectors..

Do you think that the private sector needs to invest more in its image in order to make people appreciate the entrepreneurial path and to communicate the social role of business leaders?  
213 responses



### Image of the entrepreneurial path:

92.5% of the surveyed companies believe that there is a need to further invest in the image of the private sector in order to make people appreciate the entrepreneurial path and to communicate the social role of business leaders. This image is consolidated by institutional communication but also improvements on the ground are noted.

## SECTORS REPRESENTED BY RESPONDENTS :

- 13.6% are in the textile, clothing, leather and footwear industry.
- 10.8% are from the digital and telecom sector
- 9.9% are from the mechanical and electrical engineering industries
- 9.4% are from the hospitality and tourism sector
- 8.9% are from the food, agriculture and fisheries sector
- 8.5% are from the distribution and trade sector
- 7% are from the services and consulting sector
- 4.7% are from the health sector
- 4.7% are from the building, construction materials and public works sector
- 3.3% are from the Banking, Insurance and Finance sector
- 2.8% are diversified
- 2.3% are from the timber and furniture industry
- 1.9% are from the real estate sector
- 1.9% are from the chemical sector
- 1.9% are from the handicraft sector
- 1.4% are from the transport sector
- 0.9% are from the energy sector
- 0.5% are from the media and communication sector
- 5.6% other sectors



## EL AJERI LAWYERS : THE NOTION OF TELECOMMUTING AND THE CONTINUITY OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN THE CURRENT HEALTH CONTEXT - COVID -19



Faithful to its mission and in view of the current context, our Member, El Ajeri Lawyers law firm- EAL communicated us a relevant analysis it conducted on the subject of teleworking under Tunisian legislation, the continuity of the business activity in the current health context as well as the proposed solutions and safety measures at work.

In view of the interest that can be shown by many of our members, we would like to thank EAL for their support through this valuable input which we share with you. Enjoy your reading."



## EAL : WORKPLACE SAFETY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY IN THE COVID-19 CONTEXT

In the current context in Tunisia, how can employers perceive safety at work (I) and what alternatives would be offered to them to continue their activity (II) ?

### I- SAFETY AT WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

The legislator has placed an obligation on the employer to ensure the health and safety of his employees. Thus, article 152-2 of the Labour Code (L.C.) provides that «Every employer is required to take the necessary and appropriate measures for the protection of workers and the prevention of occupational hazards. In particular, he must:

- Ensure the protection of workers' health in the workplace, Ensuring adequate working and environmental conditions,
- Protect workers from the inherent risks in the machinery, equipment and products used,
- Provide adequate collective and individual means of prevention and train workers in their use,
- Inform and make workers aware of the risks of their professions».

For his part, the employee must respect the

measures taken by the employer. To this end, article 153 (3) of the Labour Code provides that «The worker is required to comply with the requirements relating to health and safety at work, and not to commit any act or failure likely to hinder the application of these requirements. In particular, he is required to do the following:

- Carry out the instructions relating to the protection of his health and safety, as well as those of the employees working with him in the company,
- Use the means of prevention available to it, and ensure their conservation
- Participate in training cycles and information and awareness activities relating to health and safety at work that the company organizes or adheres to
- Immediately inform his immediate supervisor of any observed deficiency that could lead to an occupational health and safety hazard,
- Submit to the medical examinations prescribed for him/her»
- On the other hand, what should be done, if one of the employees informs the employer that he or she has been infected with Covid-19? ?

The decree 2020-152 of 13 March 2020 classified the Corona virus Covid 19 among the communicable diseases as listed in the annex of the law 1992-71 relating to communicable diseases.

According to the mentioned decree, the legal provisions on compulsory examination, treatment and care and prophylactic isolation in the event of communicable diseases are applicable to Covid-19. Any infringement of the restrictions and directives issued by the health authorities shall be subject to the penalties laid down in the legislation in force. Special prescriptions and measures of a preventive, curative or educational nature, specific to each of the diseases to which the affected persons are subject, may be laid down by order of the Ministry of Health. In the case of Covid-19, no such order has yet been issued.

It is, however, clear that the security measures for distancing employees must be scrupulously respected.

According to this law, any person who knows that he or she is suffering from a communicable disease must be examined and treated by a physician. The Act does not refer to the employer's obligations in such cases, but rather to the obligations of physicians who have diagnosed a communicable disease.

Also, in the context of work, and in order for the employer to protect himself, it is recommended that all employees still working on work sites should have a medical examination by the occupational physician. The doctor will then be able to detect potential cases and/or risks, and take the necessary measures, which in turn, will enable you to make the appropriate decisions.

Should an employee test positive for Covid-19, and from the employee's point of view, he will have to be treated in accordance with the provisions recommended by law 1992-71. From the employer's point of view, this employee will have to be placed on sick leave in accordance with the legislation in force, i.e. on presentation of a medical certificate within 48 hours. The other employees of the company must be informed, and a medical examination by the occupational physician must be carried out. Depending on the results of the tests, the company will have to take one of the above-mentioned measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

In addition, the site will have to be completely disinfected.

## II- ALTERNATIVES TO PURSUE ITS ACTIVITY IN A COVID-19 CONTEXT

In a context of confinement, traffic restrictions,

resulting in a slowdown or even, for some, the cessation of activity, employers will try to find legal solutions that allow them to continue their activities as best they can, while adapting to the new situation.

Also, what are the different options available to the parties in a Covid-19 context ?

### 1- Recovering lost hours

The employer may decide to interrupt work. In such



a case, he decides to close the company and will then apply the provisions of article 92 of the Labour Code according to which :

« Hours lost as a result of a collective labour disruption in an establishment or part of an establishment may be recovered within two months of the labour disruption. Hours so recovered shall be paid at the straight-time rate.

The Labour Inspectorate is informed, in advance, of collective interruptions of work and the modalities of recovery, by the head of the establishment. However, if work is interrupted by an unforeseen event, notice shall be given immediately ».

It should be pointed out that, in accordance with the provisions of article 93 of the same Code :

« (...) recovering lost hours may not have the effect of increasing the weekly working time to more than sixty hours,

excluding the hours of permanent exemption, except in the case of urgent work the immediate performance of which is necessary to prevent imminent accidents or to organise rescue measures ».

In this case, the employee is not paid for the time of

the work interruption.

Recovering is a right that belongs to the employer: he alone can prescribe it.

However, recovering of lost working hours is subject to conditions :

- The hours of work to be recovered must have been lost collectively.
- Only working hours lost collectively below the number of weekly hours worked in the company are recoverable;
- Consequently, overtime is not recoverable;
- Recovery may take place only after the collective interruption of work which justifies it; it may not be anticipated, even where the collective unemployment which is the cause is foreseeable, for example in the case of a public holiday
- It must be brought to the attention of the territorially competent labour inspectorate.
- Employees, for their part, may not refuse to carry out the recoveries requested of them without committing a fault liable to be sanctioned by dismissal or layoff.

## 2- Taking paid annual leave (annual vacation)

The company may agree with the employee that the period not worked will be considered paid vacation leave. In this case, the usual internal procedure for taking paid leave will have to be followed.

It should be noted that : « In the event of the closure of the establishment or part thereof for a period longer than that of annual leave, the employer shall be required, for each working day of closure exceeding the said leave, to pay the staff concerned remuneration not less than the daily allowance for paid leave» (Article 119 of the Labour Code).

This option does not require an addendum to the employment contract;

## 3- Unpaid leave

The company may agree with the employee that the period not worked will be considered leave without pay. In this case,

This agreement must be in writing, without requiring an addendum to the employment contract.

## 4- Technical unemployment

Despite the fact that article 21 of the Labour Code

does not cover the hypothesis of an epidemic or health emergency, the employer could consider resorting to technological unemployment, as provided for in article 21 of the Labour Code. In this sense, according to the same article « Any employer who intends to dismiss or lay off all or part of his permanent staff , for economic or technological reasons, must first notify the territorially competent labour inspectorate ». Even if the concept of technical unemployment has not been defined by the legislator, it is possible to refer to neighbouring rights in an attempt to extract its meaning. Thus, article R5122-1 of the French Labour Code provides that « The employer may place his employees in a position of partial(1) activity when the company is forced to reduce or temporarily interrupt its activity for one of the following reasons :

- 1° The economic situation
- 2° Difficulties in the supply of raw materials or energy
- 3° A disaster or bad weather of an exceptional nature
- 4° The transformation, restructuring or modernization of the company;
- 5° Any other circumstances of an exceptional nature».

Consequently, lay-offs may be resorted to in the event of one or more of the above-mentioned situations arising, bearing in mind that the consequence is the suspension of the employment contract and not its termination.

## 5- Resorting to Teleworking

The company can set up the telework system, when its activity allows it. Although this concept has not been regulated, it is possible that the parties could establish and organize it.

An addendum to the employment contract will then have to be drawn up. (See note on teleworking). All the proposed solutions will have to be discussed with the staff representatives (works council or staff representative) so that, a concerted decision can be taken.

Employers may also, depending on the case, mix different options..

## CTNCI LIBRARY

Are at your disposal, press reviews and periodicals, of the month edited in Tunisia and / or abroad:

- Réalités
- Jeune Afrique
- Périodiques de Conjuncture de la BCT
- Economiste Maghrébin
- African Manager
- Le Manager
- 24/24
- Résumé du Plan d'Investissement Extérieur

## ENHANCING THE PRESENCE OF OUR CHAMBER IN ALL THE GOVERNORATES OF THE REPUBLIC

### 09/03/2020 : FOLLOW-UP VISIT OF OUR TEXTILE MANUFACTURERS FROM KASSERINE TO THE GOVERNORATE OF BIZERTE



Mr. Tahar Hamzaoui, Mr. Lamine Dahri, Manager of CMK and Mr. Kamel Nasri, FTTH President accompanied by Mr. Mongi Goaid in Bizerte to pay a visit to:

\*1st appointment with our 2 members Mr. Ben Mittendorf (Lion Confection Group) and Mr. Pieter Roelfsema (NEDCO Group), \*and other textile companies as well as Governor Si Mohamed Gouider, whom we would like to thank for his hospitality.

### 17/03/2020 ENHANCING THE PRESENCE OF OUR CHAMBER IN EL KEF GOVERNORATE



Our Secretary General, Mr. M. Goaid, went to Kef on a business trip, with the purpose of enhancing the presence of our Chamber in the North West.

Meeting with Mr. Aymen Bouhlali, First Delegate of Kef who granted an appointment to Mr. M. Goaid (Governor Mokhtar Nefzi, not available).

Excellent communication, prospects for fruitful cooperation in the future, a much appreciated visit.

Our Secretary General met some businessmen from the Region.

## MEMBERSHIP

In this column, we provide our new members a space to present their activities: 2 **new members**:

#### 1) STÉ CHALIMAR

- Activity: Textile
- Tel: (+216) 98 44 47 30
- Email: samicherichi7@gmail.com
- Name of Manager : Mr Sami Cherichi
- (sponsored by Mr Mongi Goaid)

#### 2) STÉ SO.RE.VA.DE

- Activity: Plastic-recycling business
- Tel:+216 96 99 88 00
- Email: wahbi.mourad@yahoo.com
- Name of Manager : Mr Jaziri Faycel
- (Sponsored by Mr Mongi Goaid)

## 13-03-2020 : 2ND MEETING WITH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EMBASSY OF INDONESIA IN TUNISIA



Following the first meeting with H.E. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, Ambassador of Indonesia to Tunisia accompanied by Mr. Baskoro Pramadani, Third Secretary \* Fruitful contacts, the 2nd meeting scheduled for March 13th was held at the Embassy as agreed.

\* Possibilities of increasing Tunisian-Indonesian trade (imports of wood, exports of dates and olive oil; Indonesian companies in Tunis) + development of membership.

\* Positive contact with the potential development of our members (Tunisian and Indonesian traders of date, olive oil and wood crafts from both countries).

A meeting will be scheduled soon with an Indonesian Businessman in the textile sector, Mr. Fumanto Prasetyo, CEO of Sté Panjimas Textile.

## JUNE 2020, COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS ON THE NEW ELEC'RECYCLAGE PLANT



One year after receiving investment funds from the EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), «ELEC'RECYCLAGE Tunisie» is preparing to announce the end of construction works of its new site in the Industrial Area of Utique in June 2020. Built on a surface of 7500m<sup>2</sup>, the new headquarters will offer better working conditions for its 150 employees and will host

new equipment that will enrich the production chain through complete investment lines for the grinding of cables, electronic cards and plastic materials.

Thanks to this investment, the «ELEC'RECYCLAGE» Group which also includes the hazardous waste management company «DID'RECYCLAGE» and the pallet recycling company «ECO'PALETTES», is now a leader in the global management services offered to international manufacturers located in Tunisia.

## RENEWAL OF «COOPERATION AGREEMENT» WITH NABC



Our Chamber is planning to renew its Cooperation Agreement with the Netherlands - African Business Council(NABC), following the meeting held with Ms. Amira Ajjabi at NABC Headquarters in The Hague on 17th January 2020 during her last visit to the Netherlands.



## TO BE NOTED : Our interventions in favour of our members



Tunisian institutions  
for example :

\*\* BCT, Ministry of Finance, Directorate General of Customs, CNSS, CNAM, Ministry of Development, Investment and

International Cooperation, Ministry of Industry and SMEs, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment, Ministry of Transport, Communication Technologies and Digital Economy... as for fostering the relationship among our members,.... **Our Chamber can assist them in the follow-up of their requests and together ensure that solutions are sought in a useful manner.**



### THE ECHOS OF THE COUNCIL OF MIXED CHAMBERS (CCM)

*This new column is intended to publish ads, issue communications and event briefings related to CCM*



Given the current circumstances in Tunisia due to the coronavirus all events are postponed

## SOME IMPORTANT FIGURES

- FACED WITH THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC, THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THE CENTRAL BANK OF TUNISIA (BCT) ANNOUNCED NEW MEASURES AND MOBILIZED STRATEGIC BUDGETS.
- THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE PUBLISHED ON 22 MARCH 2020 A LIST OF MEASURES TO SUPPORT COMPANIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19.
- THE MINISTER OF FINANCE ANNOUNCED, ON THE ONE HAND, THAT TUNISIA RECEIVES USD 400M FROM IMF TO COMBAT CORONAVIRUS AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD RENOUNCE THE CURRENT PROGRAM; AND ON THE OTHER HAND, A NEW FUEL PRICING MECHANISM WILL BE SET.
- EBRD, EU AND TUNISIAN BANKS HAVE RAISED FUNDS TO COMBAT CORONAVIRUS IN TUNISIA.
- THE ARAB INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS LEADERS (IACE) PUBLISHED ON 1ST APRIL 2020 A SURVEY ON TUNISIAN COMPANIES' ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS ON THEIR BUSINESS.
- THE CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT WAS LIMITED TO -1.0% OF GDP IN THE FIRST 2 MONTHS OF 2020 (COMPARED TO -1.4% IN THE SAME PERIOD IN 2019).

## COACHING ET CONTACTS AU PROFIT DE MEMBRES/PROSPECTS POUR INTERVENTIONS UTILES

DATE	MEMBER / POTENTIAL MEMBER COMPANIES	REQUEST MADE TO	ACTIONS ACTION/ FEEDBACK RECEIVED
07/04	CFE	ONAS	Request for intervention made on 07/04
31/03	OUR COLLEAGUE, MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER SKANDER SALLEMI	Request made to TT	Problem resolved to the great satisfaction of our member
30/03	CROWN MAGHREB	Request made to BCT	Request for an appointment sent on Friday 06/03 With the expected company of our SG Date to be set at a later time
27/03	HEDI MAAROUFI	To the Governor of Bizerte	Getting in contact
24/03	ELMOUSSEM	Request made to DG of Customs	Contact became useless
24/03	ELMOUSSEM	Ministry of Transport	Reply is pending
19/3	UGFS	Ambassador of Belgium to Tunisia	Request for an appointment sent Reply is pending Date to be set at a later time
16/03	SO.RE.VA.DE	Elec Recyclage Group	Getting into contact to seek counseling and advice
11/03	SEMIT	DG of taxation	Steps taken to obtain documentation, to the great satisfaction of our member
11/03	CFE CTE	CNSS	Follow-up of steps jointly taken to seek solutions
09/03 (1)	STE CMK OF KASSERINE	* NEDCO Group * Lion Confection Group * Governor of Bizerte	Business trip to Bizerte Support from our SG (2 new members)
09/03	AEROMECA	APII	Support from our SG
05/03	CFE CTE	CNSS	Request for an appointment Support from our SG
05/03	GROUPE SEMIT	BCT	Request for an appointment sent on Friday 06/03 Support from our SG
02/03	*GROUPE NEDCO *GROUPE LION CONFECTION	* Ste CMK *Ste FOUSSANATEX	Contact with manufacturers from kasserine in Bizerte: Prospects for cooperation
26/02 28/02	VEGE MOTEURS	CCINO	Contact with possible Algerian purchaser (to be continued)
26/02	HCC	FIPA	Appointment held on Wednesday 26/02
24/02	HCC	*SAGEMCOM *CGEBT	Request for an appointment sent
21/02	BIO AGRO	APIA	Obtaining the specifications from APIA regarding batch No. 37 initiated by us Sent to the person concerned by express mail
21/02	HADS	APII	Support from our SG
21/02 (11)	HADS	DG of Customs	Support from our SG

## SOLIDARITY

### SOCIAL DEPARTMENT :

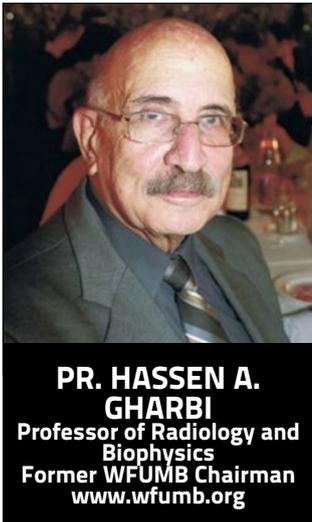
Appreciative of the proven support of some of our members for their interventions and financial support in this delicate period for people in need.

Our warmest thanks are extended to our generous donors from the Netherlands and Tunisia.



## OUR HONORARY MEMBERS' OPINION COLUMN

### ULTRASONOGRAPHY IN AFRICA, THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE TUNISIAN SCHOOL



Ultrasonography is a revolutionary technique in medical imaging, introduced into common medical practice in the 1970s and 1980s throughout the world. Since then, it has undergone a great evolution and has become an indispensable tool in radiology, gynecology, obstetrics, cardiology, ophthalmology, rheumatology, etc...

Luckily, I had the opportunity to belong to the generation of physicians who witnessed the birth of this technique and to

have modestly contributed to its application in human medicine and its promotion at the national, African and global scale as I will summarize in this free space that is offered to me.

As soon as I returned from France in January 1970 after earning a degree in Radiology and becoming a lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, specializing in Biophysics, I chose to work at the Children's Hospital of Tunis and at the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis which was newly established at the time.

My request for an ultrasound machine for the Children's Hospital of Tunis, which was called back then the National Institute of Child Health directed by a great pediatrician, the late Professor Béchir Hamza, dates back to 1974.

I set a threefold objective, as instructed by my Grand Master, who captured my attention during my stay in France, the late Professor André Djourno, holding the Chair of Biophysics at the Faculty of Medicine in Paris. He was for me a guide, the fountain of science, generosity and kindness, a man of laboratory and science. He was indeed a second father to me.

He had taught me that I had to ensure a quality teaching both theoretical and practical, to have a health care activity in hospitals to ensure care for the sick and finally to have a research activity based on the application of the accumulated know-how in biophysics to patients, in the various fields of Biophysics ...

Ultrasonography seemed to me the best choice to meet this threefold objective

It is thanks to the help of the General Company of Radiology (CGR), that I received the first B-mode ultrasound scanner as a demonstration model then as a donation, Echovideorex, of excellent quality, the best on the market at that time... and remained so for a long time... Ultrasound techniques are for the first time used for clinical scans in the Island of Djerba, Hotel Dar Djerba on June 1 and 2, 1977, First demonstration of ultrasound in Tunisia.

Thanks to the French Cooperation and to our Ministry of Public Health, a multiannual program was established; I was able to acquire a second ultrasound scanner, then a third, fourth etc...

We have become the first ultrasound center for adults and children, in Tunisia but also in Africa, a center that I had opened from the beginning to different specialties: cardiology, gynecology and obstetrics .... From one to two hundred patients a day were admitted and examined on the sole condition of providing the hospital with a Polaroid film pack per patient ...

An enormous work has been achieved thanks to the self-giving team of the Radiology Department of our hospital whose members have become great masters, Michel Brauner, Katelyn Dupuch, Wahid Hassine, Azza Hammou, Ferid Ben Chehida, Ibtissem Bellagha and with the collaboration of the great Masters of Tunisian Medicine at that time, let me name a few, Professors Mohamed Ben Ismail, Rachid Mechmeche, Mohamed Chelli, Mamia Bornaz, Faouzia Zouari, Rafik Boukhris, Moncef Dargouth, Saadeddine Zmerli. ...

From the very beginning of our work in ultrasound and driven by the idea of exploiting the patients' capital, we had at our disposal adults and children, to be of service to them, but also to find lines of research oriented towards infectious and parasitic pathologies.

The hydatid cyst, a real scourge, represented 10% of the patients we were examining by ultrasound and 30% of the large bellies of young children ...

Little was known about the imaging of hydatid cysts, and practically only in their cystic form. With assistance from collaborators, who have now become great masters, we proposed a classification into five types, which was immediately published first in the Journal Français de Radiologie in 1981 and then in the major American review, Radiology, in 1981. This classification, known as the Gharbi classification, is still very widely used throughout the world today and was proposed by the WHO expert group as one of the bases for classifying the imaging of hydatid cysts by ultrasound.

A second big idea was to diagnose osteomyelitis in children. At the request of Professor Moncef Dargouth, an orthopaedic surgeon, we were the first in the world to describe the contribution of ultrasound in fighting this disease which is frequent in our countries, a technique that has since been accepted and encouraged by the World Health Organization.

Our team has acquired a national and rapidly worldwide renown in the field of Ultrasound.

We then thought of organizing the promotion of Ultrasound in our region and then in Africa.

With our French and Italian friends we created the Mediterranean and African Society of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology, the Mediterranean and African Society of Ultrasound (MASU) under French law for the promotion of ultrasound in Africa. We conducted ultrasound courses in different African countries and helped the formation of National Ultrasound Societies,

in Morocco, Uganda, Sudan, Libya, ....

Subsequently, from 1992, MASU became an official member representing Africa in the prestigious World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology, WFUMB, which I had the honor to chair from 2013 to 2015.

Today the situation of ultrasound in Africa is by and large unsatisfactory. With the exception of the greater Maghreb and South Africa where the situation is relatively acceptable elsewhere in Africa, the situation is totally unsatisfactory. There is little ultrasound equipment and few competent operators. There are no official statistics even at the WHO and official bodies.

WFUMB is making huge efforts to help African countries meet their needs,

We held ultrasound courses; we have created 14 Centers of Education (COE) of which 5 are in Africa to train doctors, midwives and technicians in ultrasound in different regions across Africa.

Ultrasonography in Africa, like all medical imaging techniques, is in a catastrophic situation in a large number of countries. There are no official statistics everywhere but in a survey I have carried out, we can divide Africa into 2 areas:

Area 1 where the situation is relatively acceptable, with as proven examples regarding the number of radiologists per million inhabitants: Tunisia 73, Algeria 35, Egypt 26, South Africa 17...

Area 2 where the situation is disastrous, with proven examples regarding the number of radiologists per million inhabitants: Tanzania and Uganda 1, Ethiopia 2, Kenya and Zambia 4 ...

From where I stand here, I would like to address an appeal asking for help in promoting ultrasound in Africa, equipment, training sessions, the conduct of courses ... I would be delighted and honored to act as an intermediary between donors and WFUMB for all these actions.

I wanted here to try to show modestly as I say that Tunisians can contribute effectively to the promotion of medicine in Africa, Tunisia constitutes an example to be followed ...

Hassen A. Gharbi  
Professor of Radiology and Biophysics  
Former WFUMB Chairman  
[www.wfumb.org](http://www.wfumb.org).

## COOPERATION

### CONGRATULATIONS : DID'RECYCLAGE CHOSEN BY THE TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT TO REMOVE 800 TONS OF HAZARDOUS INDUSTRIAL WASTE STORED ON THE PLATFORM OF ANGED IN JRADDOU



DID'RECYCLAGE operates in the management of hazardous industrial waste in Tunisia since 2016 to collect, sort, store and dispose of hazardous industrial waste.

The collected waste is recycled in France at our partner SPUR

Environnement, a subsidiary of Véolia, and will be valorized in power generation from its combustion.

ANGED, with funding provided by GIZ, validated a call for tender in which DID'RECYCLAGE has all the necessary skills and meets all the administrative and technical criteria to make this huge project successful to remove hazardous waste which is stored for more than 10 years to the disposal facility in France while guaranteeing regulatory compliance and the optimum traceability required.

Due to this project, which will be processed during this year, the French multinational company of ELEC'RECYCLAGE group will add to its list of successes one of the largest hazardous industrial waste processing facilities in Africa.

**Congratulations to our member Silver Elec Recycling and Mr. John MILOT, the CEO.**



## MEMBER OF THE MONTH



## ESPACE SEMIT

Address : Route de Sousse 5012  
Sahline - Tunisia

- Activity: International Trade
- Phone No.: +216 36 417 000
- Fax: +216 36 417 007
- Email: [semit@espace-semit.com](mailto:semit@espace-semit.com)
- Names of Directing Managers: Mr. Gilles Portenguen / Mr. Phillip Orcel

Operating since 1989, we are specialized in the distribution of textile supplies and materials for exporting companies on the Tunisian territory.



AEROMECA is specialized in the manufacture, turning and milling of mechanical parts, mainly used in aeronautics.

AEROMECA is located in Djebel Ouest, Tunisia.

The activity is oriented towards small and medium series in a context of less technical parts with strong economic constraints.

Our customers are leading players in the aeronautics industry.

### KNOW HOW

- Industrialization of technical documentation according to specifications
- Supply of raw materials
- Parallel and numerically controlled

- turning
- Numerically controlled milling
- Adjusting
- Assembly of electro-mechanical sub-assemblies
- Dimensional inspection
- Management of heat and surface treatments with a network of partners
- Management of subcontractors in

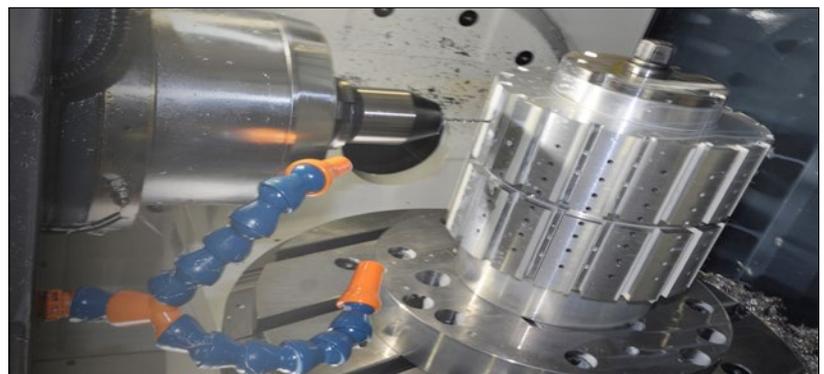
linear or cylindrical rectification,  
gear cutting, electroerosion,...



## AEROMECA

Address : Z.I Djebel Oust GP3 Bir  
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- Email: [direction@aeromeca-tn.com](mailto:direction@aeromeca-tn.com)



## FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS

### 9 TO 11 JUNE 2020 IN TUNIS : 5 TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES DEDICATED TO AFRICA, SITIC AFRICA 2020

TunisieAfrique Export closely with Société des Foires Internationales de Tunis and in cooperation with IT National Federation, UTICA and in partnership with the Tunisian Professional Association of Banks and Financial Institutions (APTBEF) and The Arab Information and Communication Technology Organization, AICTO, is organizing the fifth edition of the International Exhibition for Information and Communication Technologies dedicated to Africa, SITIC AFRICA 2020 which will take place from 9 to 11 June 2020 in Tunis.

-Held under the auspices of the Ministry of Communication Technologies and Digital Economy, this exhibition aims to showcase the Tunisian ICT offer to Tunisian SMEs while being a platform for the International Partnership involving Africa, the Arab World, the Developed Countries and Tunisia.



The international vocation of SITIC AFRICA 2020 is already confirmed: several international business delegations are already announced coming (Canada, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Algeria, Jordan, Russia...). More than a thousand foreign professional visitors are expected to participate, including more than 300 from Africa.

# CTNCi



TUNESISCH  
NEDERLANDSE KAMER  
VAN KOOPHANDEL EN  
INDUSTRIE

CHAMBRE  
TUNISO-NÉERLANDAISE  
POUR LE COMMERCE  
ET L'INDUSTRIE



**Mongi Goaid**  
General Secretary  
The Order of Orange-Nassau  
On the 3rd of May 1974

21/04/2020