



BIOGRAPHY

Wadih Hardini is the General Manager at Chedid Re UAE. Prior to that, he was a Manager at the Casualty Department at Chedid Re Lebanon. He holds a Masters in Law and an MBA from Ecole Supérieure des Affaires.

GROWTH PROSPECTS AFTER EXPO 2020

Dubai 2020 | FINANCE | VIP INTERVIEW

TBY talks to Wadih Hardini, General Manager of Chedid Re Dubai, on regulatory changes, insurance requirements, and prospects for long-term growth.

Since Chedid RE established itself in Dubai, have you seen any evolution in the regulatory framework?

The UAE insurance sector has witnessed an impressive growth over the last decade. This growth attracted a lot of investors and many international players opened their appetite to position themselves in Dubai hoping to secure their part of the cake. This has resulted in an increasing level of competition that drove the margins down despite the market growth. This phenomenon is normal for any business cycle, what is also normal is for companies to start thinking about consolidation. It is internationally recognized for a consolidation process to take place incentives should be granted by regulators and we would expect to see an initiative should the regulator feel that the timing is appropriate for consolidation. As far as Chedid Re's activity is concerned, we have gone through a considerable development related to governance and compliance. The insurance authority took the appropriate measures

that impacted positively the industry in line with the accepted international practice and standards

Is Expo 2020 impacting your operations?

Expo 2020 is expected to bring together the best of trade, innovation, and products from all over the world to the UAE. As a result, the growth prospect is enormous. The GDP is expected to grow by minimum 5%. The increase in consumption and tourism is predictable. An estimation of 25 million visits to the event. Thousands of jobs and an approximation of USD82 billion worth of projects in the areas of housing, entertainment and infrastructure by 2020. All the above will have indeed an impact on the whole insurance sector and on Chedid Re and the insurance lines on which we have the expertise and the know how.

When motor and health insurance became mandatory, what impact did it have on your company?

Since we offer a complete solution to our clients, we have specialized departments within our treaty operation that handles medical and motor business. Using our regional volume and expertise helps us putting treaties for the insurance companies to better position ourselves as pioneer in these lines of business. Therefore, the impact of the motor and health insurance lines was sizable in our books since the mandatory implementation in 2017.

What are the best examples that Chedid RE has gone through with insurance companies?

The nature of our business depends highly on the quality of the people. As far as Chedid Re is concerned, we believe that the human capital is the value that is rare hence we invest heavily in training and education whether internal or external. So, when we talk about the best example of Chedid Re, we straight think about our values more clearly investing in our education.

Are there any sectors that you would like to focus on in the short-term?

Having been in the market for the last twenty years, our brand mantra is linked to long term commitment and excellence. Therefore, short terms opportunities are not in line with our corporate strategy.

Are developers being conservative in their outlook of the economy?

Developers witnessed a crisis that can't be simply overlooked and neglected. It would have an impact on their appetite for the short run. However, the long-term confidence with the market is still there and it is only a matter of period that their activities would resume with the same previous pace assured by the vision of H.H.

Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, H.H. Sheikh Mohamad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and the leaders of the UAE.

What does the Dubai office bring to the group, and do you have any expansion plans?

You cannot be a part of a serious financial institution in the middle east without having a footprint in Dubai. Being present in Dubai, we are close to the decision making that have impact on the insurance industry across all the region. Dubai became an international hub for the financial institutions not only for regional presence. Because we have expansions plans beyond the region, we strongly believe that Dubai is a gateway passport.