

GLOBAL MARKET INSIGHTS SEMINAR

Part 4: Middle East and Africa

PANELLISTS BIO INFORMATION



Ms Cristina Talacko

Founder
SalDoce Fine Foods, and ECA Board Member

Cristina Talacko was born in Brazil and migrated to Australia 22 years ago. She is an entrepreneur, owner and founder of SalDoce Fine Foods manufacturing, retailing and exporting allergen sensitive and vegan foods to more than 20 countries.

SalDoce is the proud winner of the 2016 and 2018 NSW Premier's Export Awards, the 2017 National Ethnic Business and the NSW Business Chamber Award 2019. Most recently Cristina won the Highly Commended 2019 Premier's Award for Women in International Business.

Cristina is also co-owner of retail organic bulk food stores Naked Foods Northbridge and Naked Foods Indooroopilly promoting zero waste lifestyle.

Cristina has been contributing for many years at Board level on various not for profits including, most recently, her appointment to the Export Council of Australia Board. She is also a director on the Advisory Board of Multicultural NSW supporting the Minister for Multiculturalism in promoting cohesion amongst diverse communities. Cristina is the Vice-President of the Australia-Brazil Chamber of Commerce fostering business, trade and relations between Australia and Brazil. She is also the Chair of the environmental NFP Coalition for Conservation, a member of the Peak Consumer Consultative Council of Endeavour Energy which distributes electricity to Western Sydney, Secretary on the executive committee of the NSW Liberal Energy & Environment Policy Branch and is involved in generous community work as Secretary of One Meal - It Makes a Difference, a charity providing meals to the homeless.

She has a passion for the environment and for empowering women and has completed the Business Program "Women and Power" at Harvard Kennedy Business School in 2017. She graduated from the University of London with an LLB - Bachelor of Law, and a Diploma in Corporate Law at the University of Sydney. Cristina has also studied Law in Sao Paulo Brazil at the Federal University USP.



Ms Heidi Venamore

Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates
Australian Embassy, Abu Dhabi

Ms Venamore is a senior career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Assistant Secretary, Counter Terrorism Branch. She has previously served overseas as Head of Mission, Australian Embassy, Amman; Head of Political/Trade Branch, Australian High Commission, London; and Deputy Head of Mission, Australian Embassy, Baghdad.

In Canberra Ms Venamore has served as Director, Sea Law Section, Legal Branch; and Director, Iraq Task Force.

Ms Venamore holds a Master of Laws from the University of Cambridge; a Graduate Diploma in Foreign Affairs and Trade from the Australian National University; and a Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Laws from the University of Queensland.



Mr Miles Armitage

Charge d'Affaires
Australian Embassy, Riyadh

Mr Armitage is a senior career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He is currently the Charge d'Affaires in Riyadh following four and a half years in Amman as Ambassador to Jordan. He served as Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism from 2014-16, and from 2011-2014 he was Ambassador to Timor-Leste. In Canberra, he has also served as Assistant Secretary Parliamentary and Media Branch, and as Assistant Secretary Maritime South-East Asia Branch, and in the International Division of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Overseas, Mr Armitage has also served in Manila, New York and Islamabad.

He has a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree and a graduate Diploma in Museum Studies from the University of Sydney, and a Graduate Diploma in Foreign Affairs and Trade from the Australian National University.



Ms Gita Kamath

High Commissioner to South Africa
Australian High Commission, Pretoria

Gita Kamath previously served overseas as Deputy Head of Mission in Paris, Ambassador to UNESCO and non-resident Ambassador to Chad and the Central African Republic, and had an earlier posting in Singapore. In Canberra, she has served as Assistant Secretary of Africa Branch, Agriculture and Food Branch and Domestic Legal Branch, as well as Director, Arms Control Section. Ms Kamath holds a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws degrees from the University of New South Wales, a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the University of Technology, Sydney and a Master of Arts (Foreign Affairs and Trade) from the Australian National University. She is admitted to the Supreme Court of New South Wales as a legal practitioner.



Mr Ian Halliday

Consul-General Dubai, General Manager - Middle East, Africa and Turkey
Australian Consulate-General Dubai

Ian joined Austrade in July 2018 as General Manager - Middle East and Africa with responsibility for Austrade operations across the region. He also holds the position of Consul-General of Australia to Dubai.

Prior to joining Austrade Ian was Managing Director of Dairy Australia from January 2010.

Ian's expertise includes an extensive range of management roles with SPC, Goodman Fielder, Kraft Foods, KR Castlemaine and Vesco Foods.

At Vesco Foods and KR Castlemaine he was the CEO, responsible for leading transformational change at both organisations.

Whilst at Kraft Foods, Ian was Director of Operations responsible for all manufacturing and supply chain activities for the Kraft Australia organisation. He was also responsible for all Kraft Australia Export business, most of which included sales into Asia and the Middle East. His last appointment at Kraft Foods was the Director of Coffee Operations based in the United Kingdom.

Ian has a Bachelors in Applied Sciences (Food Tech) from Hawkesbury Agricultural College. He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), and a former Director of Agrifood at Skills Australia, and GOTAFE.



Ms Samea Maakrun

Managing Director
Sasy n Savy Pty Ltd

Samea Maakrun has been working in the cosmetic industry since 1994 and is a qualified accountant and MBA graduate. During her travels, Samea encountered burnt-out individuals seeking to enhance, improve and feel better about themselves. In October 2003 she founded Sasy n Savy Pty Ltd. Sasy n Savy manufactures Australian Natural Organic vegan skincare and wellbeing products that are high in vitamins, antioxidants and nutrients to stimulate your collagen. Supplying the premium luxury market around the world and also offers private label.

In April 2013, Nurtured Tours was created to help consumers understand, experience and enjoy the benefits of Australian nature to improve health, beauty and wellness. Samea believes these three essential elements create a happy and healthy life.



Mr Chris Ryan

Managing Director
Ryan Aerospace

Chris Ryan is Managing Director of Ryan Aerospace based on the Gold Coast in Australia.

Ryan Aerospace was founded by Chris in 2005 as a startup and his first helicopter simulator was sold to the Royal Air Force in the UK in 2006. He now has customers spanning virtually every continent of the globe and has found a niche in the marketplace; especially for military training applications.

In the last two years, Ryan Aerospace has sold more than 200 helicopter and jet fighter training simulators to the US Army, US Navy and US Air Force who are all using Ryan Aerospace simulators for primary flight training and in some cases, more advanced combat training. This has earned Ryan Aerospace countless national and international business and export awards.

Prior to this Chris was in a senior Government role which included business development, economic development and management of all the city properties including the airport. Chris was a founding board member of national organisation, Economic Development Australia and was Founding Chairman of the NSW chapter.

Chris started his career in hotel and motel management part-owning his own hotel, liquor store and night club at just nineteen years of age. He was also involved with his family's business which was a military museum.

Chris believes that he's now found his passion in life and is doing what he was put on this earth for; to save lives and reduce risk through effective training for aviation-related activities. He's doing this by creating cost-effective, yet realistic helicopter and jet fighter training simulators.