



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE – Sean Edwards, ITFA Chairman / Head Of Legal And Special Adviser To The Global Trade Finance Department At SMBC

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to our February Muse.

Three and a half years after the vote to exit the EU, the UK has officially left the bloc on 31st January 2020, the first time ever for the EU to lose a member. The world now awaits how the relationship will be managed. A rather long wait as the transition period ends December 2020. Both opportunities and dangers will abound and trade financiers will need to be alive to both.

According to Asian Development Bank, the unmet demand for trade finance is estimated to be \$1.5 trillion per year and is expected to grow. It has been noted that one persistent reason for this gap is that banks have reduced their appetite to provide cross border financing, driven by stricter capital and regulatory rules, as well as geopolitical uncertainties. Despite lessening, the tariff war between the US and China keeps adding pressure on the trade finance market.

Onto more exciting news – registrations to the 47th ITFA Annual Conference will open within the next month, when the conference website goes live. Watch this space for more information. Meanwhile we wish to thank all those institutions who have already committed to sponsoring the event – your contribution is invaluable. For those who wish to sponsor ITFA in Singapore, please send an email on info@itfa.org and we will be happy to provide information on the various packages available.

In this edition of the newsletter, Andre Casterman, Chair of ITFA Fintech Committee shares an article titled "ITFA shifts gear to address market conditions." Silja Calac, Chair of ITFA Insurance Committee prepared two pieces; A brief guide on Credit Insurance and an ITFA Regulatory Update. Audrey Zuck, A2Z Risk Services Ltd provides an interesting read titled: "Who cares about LGD?" Eleonore Wragg, GTR provides a Roundtable summary: Challenges and Opportunities in MENA. Hernan Mayol, Member of ITFA AMRC provides an update on the ITFA event held in Panama on 29th January, whilst Karl Page, ITFA Head of NERC shared his take on the NERC event held in London on 5th February.

This month we are pleased to welcome five new ITFA members to our growing Association; Beacon, Credito Emiliano SpA, SupplierPlus, Trade Advisory Network and Stenn International.

We look forward to hearing from you with any feedback you may want to share with us by sending an email to myself, any of the Board Members or to our general email, info@itfa.org.

Best wishes,

Sean Edwards