



Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the inaugural newsletter of 2025!

As we step into 2025, the world continues to grapple with a series of challenges that remind us of our need for collective resilience. From the war in the Middle East, the devastating fires in Los Angeles to ongoing geopolitical tensions, the global landscape remains uncertain. Yet, as Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Despite fragile economies and complex risks, there are reasons for cautious optimism. The anticipated easing of interest rates could provide much-needed relief, revitalizing trade and consumer confidence. While the road ahead will not be without obstacles, history teaches us that even the darkest clouds can give way to brighter horizons.

At ITFA, we are dedicated to keeping you informed, engaged, educated and entertained, and we are thrilled to share a packed lineup of events already planned for the year ahead. Stay informed about the latest updates by checking our [2025 Events Calendar](#) on our website, which is regularly updated with new information. Do not forget to follow us on [LinkedIn](#) for even more insights!

With members spanning over 50 countries, we've strategically chosen diverse locations for our events to ensure maximum reach and inclusivity. With our membership continuously expanding, we warmly invite new institutions to become part of our network. We encourage you to share information about our membership with your contacts and inspire them to join this thriving association. Joining is simple—just download the application form in Word format [here](#). Should you have any questions or need assistance, feel free to contact the communication team on [sec@itfa.org](mailto:sec@itfa.org).

And with that in mind, I'm pleased to be kicking off the year with a party! Marking Chinese New Year, we will be at Bank of China London on February 13<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the event and connect with our Asian members.

Looking forward to the biggest event of the year, we are preparing for the 51st Annual Conference, set to take place in the dynamic city of Singapore. Planning is well underway, with our team crafting an exciting agenda,



curating remarkable venues for networking and social events, and arranging outstanding entertainment. We are deeply grateful to our loyal sponsors, whose unwavering support continues to elevate this premier event year after year.

We are also actively engaging with existing and potential sponsors to broaden our partnerships. If you're interested in sponsoring this prestigious event, we encourage you to reach out to us soon. For more details, you can access the conference brochure by clicking [here](#).

Education and knowledge sharing remain at the core of our association's mission. As in previous years, we are dedicated to incorporating educational elements into all our events. Following the success of last year, we are thrilled to announce the return of our highly anticipated "ITFA Week," a three-day series of back-to-back events taking place in the City of London this July.

Collaboration with other associations is another cornerstone of our efforts to deliver exceptional value to our members. We are excited to announce that members of the MERC Committee will attend GTR Dubai this February, where they will actively contribute by leading and moderating sessions. The event will also feature an exclusive roundtable on Day 1, followed by a highly informative half-day ITFA seminar on Day 2, organized by the ITFA Middle East Regional Committee (MERC). Similarly, ITFA will be represented at GTR Cape Town, participating in engaging panel discussions.

We encourage you to stay tuned for updates and to make the most of the exclusive discounts we secure for our members at these events.

In our inaugural newsletter of 2025, we are delighted to bring you a collection of engaging and thought-provoking articles.

We begin with contributions from Rebecca Spong, Editorial Consultant, who presents two insightful pieces. The first article titled, 'ITFA to Encourage More Members to Have a Voice in 2025' features a one-on-one interview with Lorna Pillow, ITFA Deputy Chairperson and Head of Communication and Membership. Lorna



shares her vision for expanding member engagement this year, encouraging participation through speaking opportunities, committee involvement, and the introduction of innovative ideas.

The second piece titled 'ITFA's Fintech Committee's Top Priorities for 2025' outlines the fintech committee's strategic priorities for the year ahead. As the regulatory landscape continues to evolve, ITFA's fintech committee is committed to promoting the adoption of technological advancements in trade finance.

We are also pleased to include an article from André Casterman, ITFA Board Member and Head of Fintech Activities. His piece, MLETR 2025 Planning Seminar for the US Market, explores the critical December 2024 event held in New York City, which focused on the significant amendments to the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) that will facilitate the incorporation of digital asset technology into US trade and supply chain finance.

We are particularly excited to showcase the collaborative efforts of our ITFA members in this edition. Alex Waites, Executive Director at Enigio, contributes an enlightening article titled Connecting Europe and China: Enigio and TradeGo Forge a Digital Interoperability Layer. This piece examines the profound transformation in global trade as digitalization reshapes traditional processes and perspectives. Moreover, we feature an insightful article by Bilal Bassiouni, Head of Risk Forecasting at Pangea Risk. In his piece, Israel-Hamas Ceasefire Could Open a Path to Regional Stability, Bilal assesses the potential ramifications of the ceasefire agreement for regional stability and trade recovery.

To conclude this edition of ITFA News, we present highlights from our popular "Voices from our Regions" section. This month, we cover the ITFA & VEFI Christmas Cocktail Party held on December 12, 2024, which brought together a dynamic mix of professionals from banks, ITFA, and VEFI member institutions. Additionally, we report on the successful ITFA Middle East Regional Committee (MERC) Event in Dubai, which also took place on December 12, 2024, attracting a robust turnout from the broader Dubai financial community, including representatives from regional and international banks, investment firms, credit insurance providers, insurance brokers, fintechs, law firms, and corporations.



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and Forfeiting Association

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Looking ahead to February, we would like to kindly remind you of the upcoming ITFA Webinar – "Leadership in the Digital Age: Embracing AI and Key Challenges for the Future," scheduled for 3 February 2025. This webinar will focus on leadership and feature distinguished speaker Naveed Sult. February also sees the ITFA Networking Event in France and the ITFA Cross-Regional Webinar. Stay tuned for the confirmed dates for the latter two events.

As customary I would like to close my introduction by announcing the following institutions that have joined our ever-growing association: [Complidata NV](#), [Export Development Canada \(EDC\)](#), [Pytheas Capital Advisors](#), [Monarch Associates \(Matopos\) Ltd](#) and [WSFS Bank](#).

As always, 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](mailto:info@itfa.org).

Kind regards,

Sean Edwards