**Becoming a Leader of Impact**

Have you signed the pledge?

Becoming a signatory to the Pledge for Change is an important part of network membership, signalling your commitment to journey along the path of faith and values-based business leadership.

This is an exciting moment for the Salt Network and we encourage everyone to become a signatory and join the movement. While you can continue to enjoy the benefits of the Salt Network without signing the pledge, we hope you will not see it as an additional, onerous or impossible task, but rather as a statement to the direction of travel that we seek to lead in, and an opportunity for visionary, collective and faith aligned leadership.

This pledge is a recognition of the core challenges and opportunities that we as Salt members recognise future-fit business leadership must engage with.

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**The Salt Network Pledge for Change commits to the following areas in order to transition towards a sustainable economy:**

- Ensuring the protection of human rights
- Ensuring the protection of the environment
- Ensuring equality for all
- Ensuring the provision of good work
- Ensuring business works towards a good society
- Ensuring the creation of good products and services
- Ensuring sustainable partnership

Visit our LinkedIn page or email salt@christian-aid.org to read and sign the pledge.

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**About**

The Christian Aid Salt Business Network

Our vision is to create a movement of business leaders working together as agents of change, leading best practice within their own businesses and in the wider, global community.

Founded on strong theological principles, the Salt Business Network aims to inspire businesses and business leaders to be the ‘salt of the earth and the light of the world’ (Matthew 5:13-16) in advancing God’s work here on earth.

It is also grounded in learning and action. Through our workshops, online community and at events, leaders have the opportunity to explore the impact businesses large and small have on our world and re-frame what it means to be in business.

To find out more about the network and how you can be involved contact:salt@christian-aid.org
Global Britain has to be a bold Britain and business can lead the way
By Samuel Williams.

In a world where 72 million children go without primary education, half the world lack access to essential health services, 780 million lack improved water sources and 63 million people are displaced, business has a responsibility to act for good beyond the bottom line and start impacting the lives of all stakeholders and those throughout supply chains.

I recognise that in the UK we are a nation with significant challenges and injustices that impact many of us on a daily basis, and that bold domestic policy and courageous leadership must address these on both a local and national level through private, public and not-for-profit sectors. However, as a country we have a long history of international trade, aid and development which, in a post-Brexit ‘global’ Britain, is more important than ever that we redouble our commitment to. Ensuring that pressing global injustices are righted is not only a right moral action and sensible security policy, but it makes economic sense too.

Multilateral trade agreements ought not only focus on the likes of America, China and the European Union, but rather with those rapidly growing regions with exponential potential for both meaningful and mutually beneficial investment, innovation and trade such the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, India, and Central and South America.

Regions which have often been and continue to be recipients of aid by governments and INGOs have an enormous amount to offer to the international marketplace which if underestimated will leave many of us asking why we missed the opportunity.

Take Africa for instance with the swelling youth population of Sub-Saharan Africa and the resulting demographic dividend to be paid over the coming decades to a continent with 60% under 25 years olds. Anne Bakilana, senior economist at the World Bank, notes that in the 60 years between 1950-2010, the region’s population grew from 186 million to 856 million; with countries like Nigeria expected to outgrow the United States by 2050 to the tune of some 30 million. In addition, improving education, WASH and socio-political structures have driven a significant reduction in levels of deprivation in many areas.

The factors perpetuating poverty are declining and an influx of extraordinarily ambitious, informed and connected young people are stepping onto the world stage and changing the status quo.

Whilst disparity between rich and poor has often increased, significant extreme poverty persists, and the issues of population growth far surpassing that of GDP such as is forecast for Nigeria loom; the pay-out from a booming population of highly educated, globally connected, tenacious and socially conscious youth and young adult generation offers an exciting future in which greater welfare and wealth is inevitable.

It is of course not just in Africa where young people are bringing an economic step change through an innovative and entrepreneurial start-up landscape. It is seen across the UK, US and elsewhere too. The approach to work is changing, furthered through greater flexibility and a clear growth of values-based businesses models. No longer is it acceptable to simply clock in and clock out to work, the younger generations expect more from their workplace and if they can’t get it, well, they will start their own thing. A dynamic business-minded and socially-hearted enterprise revolution is unfolding before us and the question is: will you welcome the future?

I was Boris Johnson’s head of Middle Eastern investment. These are the mistakes he’s making over the region
By Omar Hassan

There is much debate about whether the UK’s economy can survive and thrive after Brexit, particularly since there is still no visibility about what the UK’s trading arrangements will be with the European Union after it leaves. In my role as head of inward Middle Eastern investment during his tenure as mayor, I saw how effective Boris Johnson was at attracting foreign investment to London. I hope he has the same focus as prime minister – particularly with regard to the Middle East.

The Salt Network has teamed up with Everyday Faith for the 2020 conference: Leaders of Impact.

Offering inspiring, pioneering and courageous lessons from the frontline of organisational leadership to boost your impact in business, faith and across your spheres of influence.

Join leaders like you to explore faith, business and how to leave an impact beyond the bottom line.

More details coming soon.

> Join the WhatsApp Group
Access the experience of fellow game changers and stay informed of network news by joining your regional Salt Network WhatsApp Group.

We have now set up WhatsApp groups for all regional Salt Hubs. These groups enable you to be more connected to the network, receive event details and network with fellow members.

> Find us on LinkedIn at ‘Salt Network’

> Find us on Twitter at @NetworkSalt

> Get involved

if you would like to get more involved in the Salt Network we have lots of opportunities from writing for Salt News, to speaking at and leading events, offering resources and anything else you can think of.

Get in touch to find out more about all the above via salt@christian-aid.org
I also hope that he can develop two-way traffic where British investors can fuel the next generation of Middle Eastern entrepreneurs, many of whom would be literally turning offers of investment away if they were fortunate enough to be based in London or San Francisco.

This may seem counter-intuitive at a time when many are cautious about doing business with and in a region that, as the Iran Deal unravels, can seem to be on the edge of a precipice. But I believe that new UK-Middle East business links are not only desirable but essential – for both us and the region. As well as the well-trodden business hubs, this should also include the places, and the relationships, that have perhaps remained unexplored. In an ideal world, that would even include Iran – a country whose entrepreneurs have much to offer the world and whom are, despite being at the heart of the silk roads that created global trade, cut off from so much of it by sanctions.

Even at times of lower tensions in the Middle East, I’ve seen the region be caricatured – including by some well-informed business leaders – as nothing much more than an oil rig or an investment vehicle.

But the Middle East is much more – for a start, its youthful populations (one third of the region is between 15 and 29) have a vitality that few in Europe or North America can compete with. That younger generation can provide the innovation, technology, and future proof businesses that will fuel global growth not only over the next decade, but throughout the next century.

And there is no question that those youth are tech-savvy – it is no longer just Saudi Arabia that has long led the world in social media usage, but that there are emerging tech hubs in the Kingdom, the UAE and Egypt.

There is a wealth of entrepreneurial talent in the region that Britain should tap as eagerly as it drills the land’s oil. On a recent trip to Kurdistan, I met a young Syrian refugee who had developed a smart censor that detects food waste in restaurants. With our help, he secured funding to develop the technology. Even among those in the Middle East more fortunate than Syrian refugees, entrepreneurship is becoming a necessity: in oil-rich Oman, 40 per cent of young people are unemployed and are increasingly looking to startups for essential job creation. Britain’s links with the region are already some of its strongest with any region in the world. As well its historic role, modern Britain is a preferred partner for many of the young Middle Eastern entrepreneurs I meet.

They want British mentoring, partnerships and investments more than those from any other part of the world. They are geographically and often culturally closer to the UK than other emerging markets in Asia. And the pace of change and development – both technological and social – is faster than anywhere else on earth. This can be seen in everything from smart cities to women’s rights.

There is no doubt that these opportunities are in the obvious places like Dubai and Abu Dhabi, but also in the more unlikely places like Iran. The Islamic Republic’s population is young, even by Middle Eastern standards, and their technological awareness and ingenuity is regularly on display in the country’s varied social movements, most of which are started and coordinated online.

London has always been the preferred destination when the Middle East’s elite looks to invest – in future, it may become their first port of call when it’s hungry young entrepreneurs look to grow their businesses. The flow of oil between the United Kingdom and the Middle East will never be two-way, but the transfers of money and knowledge can be.

Omar Hassan was head of inward Middle Eastern investment during Boris Johnson’s tenure as Mayor of London, and is co-founder of UK MENA Hub. (This article was first published in the Independent).

**Does a pandemic enable us to innovate a new way of working?**

By Peter Smith

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on global trade and business has been both shocking and profound, shaking long-accepted tenets around the culture of work – business travel, client meetings, projected trade and finance, the office environment – almost everything. Accompanying this has been a toxic mix of misconception, anxiety, fake news and perhaps a fair amount of denial too. In the aftermath of this impact on the world of work,
Christians are caught up in dealing with radical decision-making and drastic changes in workplace patterns.

What can Christians in business do, both in respect of the current virus crisis and for longer-term changes in the pattern of work? Here are four suggestions for how you can approach the current challenges:

1) Help to maintain a calm, balanced perspective. Neither denying there is an issue nor becoming paralysed by it.

2) Look to support people as much as possible through the upheaval and change.

3) Plan ahead as far as possible, especially where you have responsibility for company direction and employee welfare.

4) Become known for providing measured and reasonable communications with others.

Increasingly the emphasis is on people being required to work from home (whether part of a process of self-isolating or not) but without the benefit of a gradual adaptation to the mindset and level of discipline that home-working requires. For some, working from home is a shock: home can be a lonely place to work, often full of distractions and where communication with colleagues and clients is always long-distance and often impersonal.

How does the new home-worker deal with this change, whether on a temporary basis or more permanently?

It has been recognised for some time that some of the disadvantages of working from home include feelings of isolation, being easily distracted, lack of productivity and an inability to switch off. The lack of ‘community’ can be exacerbated by inadequate communication and personal contact, so here are a few suggestions:

Hold virtual meetings. There are an increasing number of apps and software tools, such as Zoom, Teamviewer and collaborative work and messaging solutions like Basecamp, Slack and Hubspot. This can be social, perhaps include informal discussion and prayer as appropriate.

Manage time well and promote accountability. Since the worker and manager can’t actually see each other, the issue of effective monitoring is a key one to sort out effectively. Time-tracking tools to monitor worked or billable hours help to make sure team members don’t get burnt out working overtime and can also help to monitor time spent on different projects to establish efficiencies etc.

Set clear responsibilities and areas of authority. This allows a home-worker to ‘own’ their work and act independently, making fewer interruptions for clarifications and less risk of mistakes being made with the final outcome.

Consider investing in the use of local co-working space. Not only does a coworking environment provide productive workspace, but also the connection with other people is a positive antidote to the isolation experienced by many home-workers. Local ‘Jellies’ are a popular option, as are networking events, and can lead to some good connections. You might consider setting up a Business Friends Club, providing pop-up workspaces hosted by a local church (see www.businessfriendsclub.org for more information).

No-one knows how long the current situation with the coronavirus will last, or how severely it will impact individuals and companies across the UK and globally. Christians need to pray for wisdom, faith and courage, for protection for their work colleagues and customers, and to keep their eyes open to new opportunities that may arise. Let’s pray that God will use his people to be a light in the present darkness, to help those in need around us and offer words of hope in a dark, uncertain and changing world.

Peter Smith is Managing Director of Augment Partnership, a Community Interest Company committed to resourcing churches to impact their communities. Peter is responsible for rolling out the Business Friends Club programme which enables churches to provide pop-up workspaces.