1. The November Steering committee meeting was successful

- As agreed, the steering committee met on November 3 and 4, 2008, in Beirut, at the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance. The meetings aimed at developing a medium term strategic vision to support the institutional development of GIFT-MENA and designing a work plan for 2009. We have attached for your attention the meeting's report and scheduled calendar of activities for 2009.

2. Institutional development

- We have hereby enclosed copies of the GIFT-MENA convention and bylaws in the Arabic language. Your feedback on these documents would be much appreciated for finalization.
- Fundraising efforts are on-going.

3. Regional cooperation is quite active with 8 MOUs signed or in process, and ongoing Study Visits

- Several of Memoranda of Understanding are in the process of being ratified between:
  a. The Dubai School of Government and the Institute of National Administration of Palestine
  b. The Ministry of Economy and Finance of Morocco and the Arab Planning Institute
  c. The Ministry of Economy and Finance of Morocco and the Institute of Finance of Lebanon
  d. The Arab Planning Institute and the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon
  e. ADETEF and the Institute of National Administration of Palestine
  f. ESCWA and the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon

- This comes in addition to both Memoranda of Understanding signed by the Arab Planning Institute with the Institute of National Administration of Palestine and the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO) respectively.

- The Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon hosted a delegation from the National Center for Consultancy and Management Development of Iraq-NCCMD, for a four-day study tour to exchange on training expertise and tools, between October 9 and 13, 2008. This study tour was prepared and implemented in partnership with ESCWA and UNDP Iraq.

- The Institute of Finance has also hosted a delegation from the Finance Institute and Ministry of Finance of Yemen to share its training expertise in supporting public financial management reform through capacity-building.

- The National School of Administration (ENA) of France is currently implementing a new initiative on leadership in collaboration with the Institute of Public Administration of Saudi Arabia.

- The Dubai School of Government is planning a series of workshops on leadership and educational reform with the Ministry in charge of Administrative Reform in Egypt.

4. Activities/Projects currently on going

- The “Training Management System” project, implemented by ADETEF has been launched in September 2008. Two French experts underwent a needs assessment mission to the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon and the Palestinian training center.

- The regional workshop on Performance Budgeting, initially planned for December 2008, has been postponed until the first quarter of 2009. Further information will be sent to you as soon as available.

5. International venues to which GIFT-MENA members participated

- Mr. Ashraf Almimi (from the Institute of National Administration of Palestine) represented the GIFT-MENA network on the occasion of the conference on "Redesigning Public Administration Training to deal with the Global Development Agenda" organized by the National School of Public Administration of Rome, in
partnership with IASIA and UNDESA. Other GIFT-MENA members have also attended this event, namely the Institut Supérieur d'Administration of Morocco and the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon.

✓ Ms. Rola Darwish (from the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon) represented the GIFT-MENA network at EIPA Fifth Regional Conference and Sixth Network meeting that was held in Barcelona on November 26 and 27, 2008.

✓ Ms. Lamia El Moubayed Bissat (from the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Finance of Lebanon) will represent the GIFT-MENA network at the conference on "International Cooperation in Public Administration" that is taking place on December 19, 2008, in France.

For sharing your news with network's members, kindly send by mail to the GIFT-MENA Secretariat the information you wish to disclose and we will include it in our next GIFT-MENA Activity Report.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon,

On behalf of the GIFT-MENA Secretariat
Sabine Hatem

For more information, please contact the GIFT-MENA Secretariat - IoF: 01-425 1479 or contact@if.org.lb