



THE MENA2050 IMEC DECLARATION

A strategic opportunity not to be missed

The India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is a consequential strategic and economic initiative linking India, the Middle East, and Europe. Conceived as a framework for regional integration, the IMEC integrates rail, road, and maritime routes with digital systems, energy transition, water and food security, trade, employment, and economic, diplomatic, and security cooperation. In an increasingly fragmented world, its promise lies in advancing sustainable prosperity across three continents.

History offers a powerful reminder. Where connections endure, societies flourish; where arteries are severed, conflict deepens. Across desert sands lie the remnants of the Hejaz Railway—once an audacious effort to bind a region rather than divide it. Long before, the ancient Golden Road carried goods, ideas, and cultures from India to Europe through Oman, Yemen, the Nabatean cities, Gaza, and the Mediterranean. The IMEC builds on this deep historical memory, but it must now move beyond nostalgia and symbolism toward functional integration, leveraging decades of work by scientists and engineers in geology and topography to determine the optimal tracks.

A call to action

The IMEC is not a single linear infrastructure project. It is a flexible constellation of intermodal segments that can be financed, governed, and developed independently, calibrated to political sensitivities. This modular architecture enables the deployment of pilot projects that translate strategic ambition into credible and actionable outcomes.

The IMEC now stands at an inflection point. Geopolitical conflict, heightened political risk, and lack of shared governance and financing have stalled momentum. Without collective resolve, the promise of this grand initiative will dissipate. In a world marked by systemic shocks, scarcity, and planetary



boundaries, delay is not neutral: it carries significant economic, political, and social costs.

This declaration is therefore a call to action: to adapt the IMEC to current realities and move decisively from vision to implementation.

The IMEC should not be conceived as a zero-sum geopolitical alignment but rather as part of an emerging global ecosystem of corridors. MENA2050 views the IMEC and related regional initiatives as complementary rather than competitive. Together, they can redefine co-development, resilience, and shared prosperity in a multipolar world.

In this context, digital cooperation offers the fastest and least politically exposed pathway to regional progress. Digital trade systems, interoperable customs, trusted data flows, and cybersecurity frameworks enable collaboration even when physical routes or political relations are constrained. A robust digital backbone can catalyze broader corridor development, advancing integration even as physical infrastructure is phased in.

From vision to implementation

The implementation of the IMEC can be accelerated through low-cost, high-impact pilot projects, developed in segments that demonstrate feasibility, build trust, and create momentum. Large-scale visions will endure only if anchored in delivery. Pilots in railroad connectivity, smart logistics, energy, water, and post-conflict stabilization can translate aspiration into credibility.

Through a scalable approach, the IMEC can:

- Invest selectively across segments of the rail and maritime corridors and other connections calibrated to political sensitivities.
- Support economic growth, innovation, and skilled employment.
- Strengthen resilient and diversified trade routes.
- Advance digital connectivity and next-generation energy systems.
- Enhance climate resilience, water security, and food systems.



- Embed stabilization and reconstruction, particularly in post-conflict settings, within a broader regional framework.

The primacy of governance

MENA2050 is a civil society and policy platform that does not speak on behalf of any government. It recognizes, however, that realizing the IMEC ultimately requires intergovernmental leadership, including political stewardship, formal governance structures, and sustainable financing mechanisms.

In the current phase of the IMEC, with the engagement of relevant civil society actors, MENA2050 calls for:

- The establishment of an intergovernmental IMEC Organization, with a permanent Secretariat, a dedicated professional staff, a sustainable budget, and the integration of existing IMEC Special Envoys and Working Groups into a coherent institutional framework.
- The convening of an annual IMEC Summit of Heads of States and Governments, complemented by regular ministerial meetings, to sustain political momentum, provide strategic direction, and mobilize coordinated action.
- The establishment of an IMEC Civil Society Council and an IMEC Parliamentary Conference to strengthen social ownership, legislative alignment, and institutional support.
- The launch of an IMEC Fund—alongside additional instruments, including joint sovereign fund mechanisms where appropriate—to ensure long-term financing, catalyze national and private investment, and enable durable public–private partnerships.
- The creation of an IMEC branding, including a logo, and a robust, persevering global public communication campaign to raise awareness on the IMEC and its benefits, promote adherence, stimulate investments and materialize an "IMEC soft power" dynamic.

Together, these steps translate vision into governance and advance the IMEC from aspiration to implementation.