Press Release

IFZA and IHC unveil a Pioneering Global Partnership at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2026

Davos, Switzerland, 23 January 2026 — International Free Zone Authority AG (IFZA), the Swiss based global operating entity of the IFZA network, and IHC, a global investment company focused on building dynamic value networks, today unveiled a landmark strategic partnership at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2026. The partnership marks a significant step toward advancing globally connected, future ready business ecosystems and developing next generation economic infrastructure across multiple international markets.

Bringing together two globally established institutions, the collaboration combines IFZA's extensive international network of more than 65,000 businesses, 2,500 authorised agents and representatives, and operational presence across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas, with IHC's position as one of the world's largest investment companies, with a diversified portfolio of over 1,400 subsidiaries and a market capitalisation of USD 239 billion, alongside its deep expertise in building, scaling, and operating complex platforms and infrastructure projects.

Together, IFZA and IHC will collaborate on specific free zone and special economic zone projects, with a number of countries already under active discussion. These initiatives are intended to support cross-border trade, investment flows, and long-term economic development through carefully designed, well governed business ecosystems.

The Agreement was signed at the IHC House in Davos by Syed Basar Shueb, CEO of IHC, and Martin G. Pedersen, Chairman of IFZA.

A Global Platform for the Next Era of Trade

At its core, the IFZA-IHC collaboration is focused on the co-development of globally connected business platforms that enable companies to expand across borders, access new markets, and operate with confidence amid geopolitical and economic change.

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IFZA's Swiss based global structure anchors a rapidly growing ecosystem supporting entrepreneurs, SMEs, and multinational companies worldwide. With active operations and partnerships across the Middle East, Europe, Panama, Pakistan, China, and other strategic markets, IFZA brings regulatory insight, operational agility, and hands-on experience in establishing and managing successful free zones and special economic zones.

IHC complements this platform through its proven capability in developing, funding and operating large-scale, multi-sector initiatives, its strong governance framework, and its ability to deliver forward-looking complex projects at scale. The partnership reflects a natural alignment between IFZA's global business enablement expertise and IHC's track record as a global investment company in building dynamic value networks.

Leadership Perspectives

"This partnership represents a defining moment in how economic platforms are designed, built, and sustained across borders," said **Martin G. Pedersen, Chairman of IFZA**. *"By working with IHC on clearly defined projects, we are combining IFZA's globally connected business ecosystems and operational expertise with IHC's strong diversified ecosystem and access to capital. Together we will develop free zones and special economic platforms that create long-term and sustainable value and success. This collaboration is about building the right infrastructure, in the right markets, with the right partners."*

Syed Basar Shueb, CEO of IHC, added: *"At IHC, we focus on partnerships grounded in shared ambition and practical execution. Our collaboration with IFZA is centered on specific economic development initiatives where our combined expertise can create measurable, long-term impact. Alongside IFZA, we are bringing IHC's experience across advanced technologies and business enablers, including artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and financial services, to help build globally connected ecosystems that are investment ready and designed for the future of trade. This marks the beginning of a focused, long-term partnership dedicated to enabling sustainable economic progress globally."*

Aligned with Global Priorities at WEF 2026

The partnership was announced during the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2026 in Davos, as global leaders gather to address geopolitical trends, economic transformation, and the need for new engines of sustainable growth.

Through this collaboration, IFZA and IHC are positioning free zones and special economic zones as interconnected global platforms that support trade flows, investment, innovation, and cross border collaboration, while aligning public and private sector objectives.

A Defining Partnership for the Future

The IFZA-IHC partnership reflects a long-term commitment to developing scalable economic infrastructure that responds to the realities of a changing global economy.

As governments and businesses seek new models for cooperation and growth, IFZA and IHC are setting a clear direction by working together on targeted, high impact projects that enable businesses to expand across borders with confidence, resilience, and purpose.

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About International Free Zone Authority AG (IFZA)

International Free Zone Authority AG (IFZA AG) is an internationally focused business enablement platform specialising in the development and management of free zones and special economic zones. Headquartered in Zurich, IFZA AG supports entrepreneurs, SMEs, governments, and multinational companies with efficient, compliant, and cost-effective company formation and operational solutions.

IFZA is distinguished by its multinational approach and personalised service model, delivered through a global network of government entities, chambers of commerce, business councils, and authorised professional partners. This ecosystem enables businesses to establish, operate, and scale confidently across multiple markets.

In addition to company formation, IFZA provides a range of value-added services, including flexible infrastructure and workspace solutions, digital and marketing support, and professional training programmes designed to support collaboration, client engagement, and sustainable business growth worldwide.

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About International Holding Company (IHC):

Established in 1999, IHC has become the most valuable holding company in the Middle East and one of the world's largest investment firms, with a market capitalization of AED 878.5 billion (USD 239 billion). Since then, it has transformed to represent a new generation of investors. IHC's commitment to sustainability, innovation, and economic diversification spans over 1,400 subsidiaries, driving growth across industries like Asset Management, Healthcare, Real Estate, Financial Services, IT, and more.

IHC continually looks beyond the stand-alone value of its assets for opportunities, stepping outside of traditional approaches and artificial barriers to unlock opportunities across its portfolio, enabling sector-agnostic Dynamic Value Networks and creating results that are often much greater than the sum of their parts.

At IHC, we take our responsibility to shareholders, customers, and employees seriously. Our commitment to responsible investment ensures that we create sustainable value by staying connected to the communities we serve, making a positive difference with every investment.

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