



CEMA, Monaco's fledgling business club, naturally chose Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to celebrate its second anniversary and to host its second international mission

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The Club of Monegasque Entrepreneurs in Africa (CEMA) (www.cema.mc) held a “premiere” in Monaco for its second anniversary celebrations on 14 September before turning its attentions to Africa.

CEMA's 17-member official delegation headed out to Abidjan **from Monday 24 to Thursday 27 October**, where club representatives met up with a dozen or so local staff. The agenda followed the “rule of thirds” that traditionally governs CEMA's international missions:

- Welcome reception and official meetings with leading political and socio-economic figures from Côte d'Ivoire.
- B2B meetings with local manufacturers and traders.
- Visits to sites of interest, including the Autonomous Port of Abidjan and the Niecky - Compagnie Fruitière banana plantation.

The delegates were joined by Mr Jean-Marie Ackah, Honorary Consul of Monaco and Chairman of Société Ivoirienne de Productions Animales (SIPRA). On 27 October, Mr Ackah was elected by his peers to serve as President of the Confédération Générale des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire (CGECI), the country's employers' federation that represents more than 1,500 businesses with combined turnover of €21 billion.

“We are a club of family-owned businesses, each of which has forged its own path in Africa,” explained CEMA President Patricia Husson. “As we discovered during our first joint trip to Kinshasa last October, CEMA has become a real driver of conviction and initiative in the last two years. In fact, we first decided to set up the club following a cultural, humanitarian and economic mission led by H.R.H. The Princess of Hanover to DRC in June 2013.”

“Together, we are greater than the sum of our parts,” added Frédéric Geerts, CEMA General Secretary. “Côte d'Ivoire is a beacon of economic recovery in Africa, so it was only natural that we chose Abidjan as the destination for our second international mission. The country has experienced several years of exceptional economic growth and has come through a period of crisis. The whole population is benefiting as a result.”

Joining Patricia and Frédéric is CEMA Vice-President Adnan Houdrouge, who was born in Africa and has a deep affiliation with the continent. All three business leaders agree on one thing: “to work in Africa, you have to love Africa”.

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> About CEMA

CEMA is a club of Monegasque companies with operations across 45 African countries. It currently has 16 members, including five founding members. With African turnover of around €1.5 billion, CEMA's members represent the vast majority of the Principality's business interests on the continent. The club is supported by the Federation of Monegasque Enterprises (FEDEM) and the Monaco Economic Board.

CEMA is a business networking club and a forum where members can share experiences, information and business best practice. The club also helps to organise bilateral meetings with leading African figures. In February 2016, CEMA signed a twinning agreement with its French counterpart, CIAN.



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