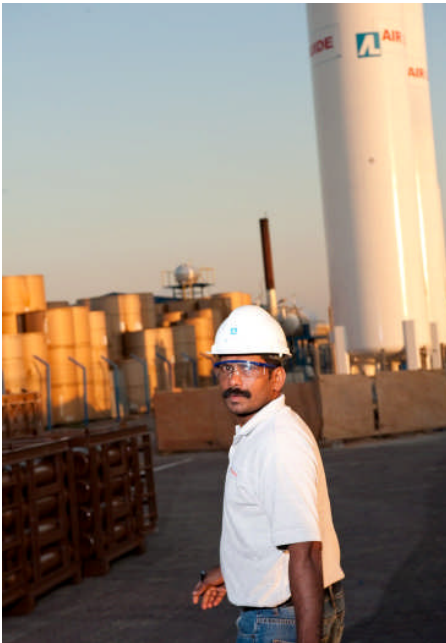


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## Growth in the Middle East: new investments in 3 countries

*press release*



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### Air Liquide in the Middle East

Air Liquide is present in **Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the United Arab Emirates**, where the Group has its Middle East headquarters.

For 5 years now, the Group has opened production sites in close proximity to its customers in promising industrial basins.

The development of distribution equipment and the laying of a pipeline network have followed these investments. This growth, based on the technological reliability of Air Liquide's solutions, has been complemented by strategic acquisitions in this zone.

With **600 employees** in the Middle East, Air Liquide has invested around 500 million dollars over the 2002-2009 period and it **will invest an additional one billion dollars in the Arabian Gulf region over the next five years.**

The Middle East economies continue to grow, generating many different needs for industrial gases. Air Liquide, **the world-leading Group** in the Middle East, continues its development. In order to support its **customers from the steel sector** in this growth area, **the Group is investing in new production units**, representing a **total investment of almost €60 million.**

**In Egypt**, in the industrial zone of Sadat City, midway between Cairo and Alexandria, the Group has signed a new long term contract with the steel manufacturer EZZ for their supply of gaseous oxygen. A production unit with a capacity of **110 tonnes per day** of gaseous oxygen will be commissioned **at the end of 2011** and will enable the customer to increase its production of steel for long products.

**In Qatar**, through its subsidiary GASAL, the Group has signed a new long term contract with Qatar Steel. Within this framework, a new oxygen production unit will be added to the existing two, bringing the total production capacity on this site to **650 tonnes of oxygen per day**. This unit will be commissioned in the **first quarter of 2012.**

Furthermore, the Group has **begun activities in Syria** with its first unit in the country. An oxygen production unit **with a capacity of 200 tonnes per day**, dedicated to the steel producer Medsteel, has just been commissioned in the new industrial city of Adraa, near Damascus. This unit, which also produces liquid nitrogen and argon, will contribute to supply the industrial gases market throughout the Levant region.

**Pierre Dufour**, Senior Executive Vice-President of the Air Liquide Group responsible for the Middle East region, declared: **"Air Liquide is proud to meet the growing needs of its customers and accompany them in their geographical expansion. Today, the Group has a unique strategic position in the Middle East which generates significant growth. The emerging economies are one of the Group's growth drivers."**

## The Large Industries business line of Air Liquide

offers **gas and energy solutions** that improve process efficiency and help achieve greater respect for the environment, mainly to the **refining and natural gas, chemicals, metals and energy** markets. 2009 revenues were **€ 3,219 million**.

***Air Liquide is the world leader in gases for industry, health and the environment, and is present in over 75 countries with 42,300 employees.** Oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and rare gases have been at the core of Air Liquide's activities since its creation in 1902. Using these molecules, Air Liquide continuously reinvents its business, anticipating the needs of current and future markets. The Group innovates to enable progress, to achieve dynamic growth and a consistent performance.*

***Innovative technologies** that curb polluting emissions, lower industry's energy use, recover and reuse natural resources or develop the energies of tomorrow, such as hydrogen, biofuels or photovoltaic energy... Oxygen for hospitals, homecare, fighting nosocomial infections... Air Liquide combines many products and technologies to develop valuable applications and services not only for its customers but also for society.*

***A partner for the long term,** Air Liquide relies on employee commitment, customer trust and shareholder support to pursue its vision of sustainable, competitive growth. The **diversity** of Air Liquide's teams, businesses, markets and geographic presence provides a solid and sustainable base for its development and strengthens its ability to push back its own limits, conquer new territories and build its future.*

***Air Liquide explores the best that air can offer to preserve life, staying true to its sustainable development approach.** In 2009, the Group's revenues amounted to **€12 billion**, of which almost 80% were generated outside France. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.*