Nadim Habassi

Professional background



From copper trading to advisory work

I have eighteen years of experience in the African commodities trade. In 2011, I founded METALICO TRADING, a company based in Dubai and Hong Kong. From 2011 to 2023, I negotiated and completed purchases and sales of metals, mainly copper, across Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Through this work I built lasting relationships with African leaders. The trust I earned in trade gave me the opportunity to handle sensitive matters, bring negotiations to a close and put agreements into practice.

Today, I accompany African heads of state and advise a Middle Eastern sovereign wealth fund on investment matters.

Working with African delegations

I regularly accompany African delegations to political and economic forums. Through my contacts in Africa and the Middle East, I bring together the public officials, investors and business leaders involved in a particular matter. As a diplomat and negotiator, I help them identify where they disagree and clarify what each side is prepared to commit to.

Preparing for a visit starts well before departure. I want to know who needs to be in the room and what each person hopes to take away. My experience on the ground, particularly in West Africa, helps me connect the priorities raised during a visit with the practical needs of entrepreneurs.

After the meetings, I get back in touch with the people involved. Sometimes a commitment needs clarifying, a misunderstanding needs clearing up, or two people need to sit down together again. That quieter part of the job helps delegations carry their discussions forward.

An African president calls me “the man in the shadows”. In his eyes, I am wherever a conversation is needed, even when I am rarely seen. At times I work outside formal talks to help resolve a sensitive issue. That work has taught me to hold my ground, listen patiently and find the resolve to return to the table when talks become difficult.

Selected projects in Africa

I took part in negotiations concerning the return of refugees. I also worked on projects to establish schools and on grant applications for large companies.

In the energy sector, I concluded a contract with Bpifrance for an electrification project in an African country. In banking, I helped a bank from the Maghreb establish operations in another African market.