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## Eng. Ahmed Ezz Calls for Protecting the Arab Steel Industry Amid Rising Global Protectionism

Eng. Ahmed Ezz, Chairman of the Arab Iron and Steel Union and Chairman of Ezz Steel, emphasized that recent decisions to impose customs tariffs to protect national industries reflect a fundamental shift in the global economic philosophy toward greater protectionism, noting that “the idea of a borderless global village no longer exists.”

In an interview with *Al Arabiya Business* on the sidelines of the 3rd Saudi International Iron and Steel Conference, Ezz stated that every country has the right to take measures to protect its own industry. He pointed out that former U.S. President Donald Trump, when he imposed tariffs, was exercising this legitimate right to safeguard American industry.

He added that what matters most is not to judge such decisions, but to understand their impact on reshaping global trade flows. The U.S. move, he explained, served as a signal to other countries—such as the European Union—which followed with similar protectionist measures, leading to a worldwide wave of such policies, particularly in the steel sector, which has witnessed around 600 protectionist actions.

Ezz questioned the position of Arab industries in this new global environment, asking: “Will we take similar steps to protect our industries, or remain exposed to global competition?” He stressed that this shift goes beyond the steel industry and represents a redefinition of the entire philosophy of international trade.

He concluded, “We are no longer in a borderless world, but in a new national era where each country protects its industry and redefines its economic interests.”



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### North Africa

#### Egypt and Saudi Arabia Discuss Strengthening Industrial Cooperation in the Iron and Steel Sector

Lieutenant General Kamel El-Wazir, Deputy Prime Minister for Industrial Development and Minister of Industry and Transport, participated alongside Bandar Al-Khorayef, Saudi Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources, in the ministerial session titled “Empowering the Localization of the Iron Value Chain to Support Economic Growth and Income Diversification”, held within the framework of the 3rd Saudi International Iron and Steel Conference in Riyadh. The Minister affirmed that Egyptian–Saudi cooperation in the steel sector represents a model of successful Arab industrial integration, through which both countries can achieve regional self-sufficiency in steel products, reduce production costs, and enhance the global competitiveness of Arab products. He emphasized that this cooperation is a strategic choice to strengthen regional industrial security and build an integrated Arab economy capable of facing global challenges.

El-Wazir described the Gaza peace agreement as a new dawn for the Middle East, opening the door to reconstruction that will require massive quantities of steel, noting that Egypt is ready to contribute to these efforts with its steel products through joint Arab cooperation.

He stressed that the iron and steel industry is a cornerstone of the Egyptian economy, forming the backbone of national industrial and urban development. Egypt’s government has adopted a comprehensive national vision to advance the sector by deepening local manufacturing, localizing supply industries, and adopting green and sustainable production technologies. The Minister highlighted Egypt’s efforts to localize billet production to reduce import bills, launch a national scrap collection initiative, and utilize local iron ore reserves in El-Wahat and Wadi Allaqi. He also noted ongoing reviews of gas and electricity prices to ensure competitiveness both domestically and globally.

Regarding smart protection policies, El-Wazir explained that Egypt has imposed temporary safeguard duties on imported billets and flat products to protect local industry from dumping, while simultaneously implementing structural measures to lower costs and localize intermediate industries.

He further presented the features of Egypt’s national strategy to develop the iron and steel sector, which aims to enhance the entire value chain, encourage the production of high-value steel products, and advance the transition toward a green economy.

The Minister concluded by emphasizing that Egyptian–Saudi integration offers a strategic opportunity to build a strong regional industrial alliance, leveraging the Kingdom’s advantages in energy and raw materials and Egypt’s skilled workforce and strategic location — paving the way for joint investments and the development of a robust Arab iron and steel industry.

#### Egypt Stock Exchange announces details of Al-Organi’s acquisition of a stake in Ataqa

The Egyptian Stock Exchange has announced the details of Al-Organi for Development and Investment’s acquisition of a 26.25% stake in Misr National Steel Company – Ataqa. Al-Organi for Development purchased around 315 million shares of Ataqa’s capital for a total value of EGP 1.9 billion, at an average price of EGP 6.04 per share. As a result, El Garhy Investment and Development Group reduced its stake in Ataqa from 89.04% to 62.79%, by selling the same number of shares acquired by Al-Organi, according to the executing company, Synergy Brokerage. Misr National Steel – Ataqa reported a net profit of EGP 103.9 million during the first quarter of this year, compared to EGP 60.9 million in the same period of 2024. The company’s sales rose to EGP 2.02 billion, up from EGP 1.01 billion in the corresponding period last year.



## Rebar Prices in Egypt – October 13, 2025

Rebar prices in the Egyptian domestic market witnessed a significant decline during the second week of October 2025, compared to the week before last.

Ezz Steel maintained its price at EGP 38,200 per ton with no change, while Al-Suez Steel dropped to EGP 35,000 per ton, marking a decrease of EGP 2,900.

El-Marakby Steel also fell to EGP 36,000 per ton, down by EGP 1,500, while Egyptian Steel remained stable at EGP 38,100 per ton.

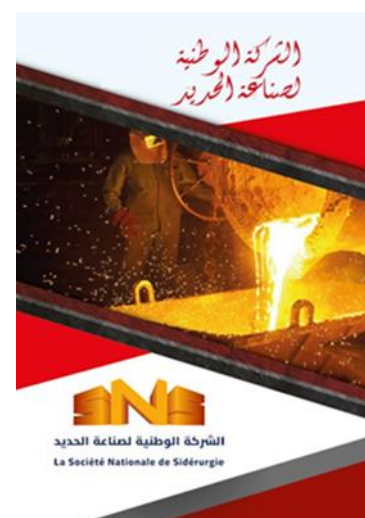
Meanwhile, Ashry Steel and Garhy Steel recorded EGP 35,000 and EGP 36,000 per ton, respectively, whereas Misr Steel declined to EGP 34,700 per ton, down EGP 800 from the week before last.

Other companies also continued to reduce prices, with El Komy Steel at EGP 33,700 per ton, El Ola Steel at EGP 33,000 per ton, and Al Gioshy Steel at EGP 33,700 per ton, showing a drop of EGP 1,300.

Rebar prices were as follows compared to the week before last:

Company	EGP/t	Pointer	w-w
Ezz Steel	38,200	-	0
Suez Steel	37,900	▼	-2900
Beshay Steel	37,000	-	0
El Marakby Steel	37,500	▼	-1500
Egyptian Steel	38,100	-	0
Ashry Steel	35,750	▼	-500
Garhy Steel	36,000	-	0
Misr Steel	35,800	▼	-800
El komy Steel	35,000	▼	-800
El Ola steel	34,500	▼	-800
Al Gioshy steel	35,000	▼	-1300

Prices include 14% VAT



### Gulf Area

#### Minister of Industry: SAR 60 Billion in New Investment Opportunities in the Steel Sector

Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources Bandar bin Ibrahim Al-Khorayef revealed the completion of studies to determine the optimal options to address the local market deficit and reduce steel flat product imports. He noted that there are investment opportunities worth around SAR 60 billion, distributed across a range of key products vital to the Kingdom's local industries.

In his speech at the 3rd Saudi International Iron and Steel Conference 2025 held in Riyadh, Al-Khorayef stated that a study on the status of small-scale factories using induction furnaces to produce rebar has been completed, with the goal of enhancing their operational efficiency and sustainability in alignment with the future of the Kingdom's industrial sector.

He added that, to keep pace with rapid developments, the National Industrial Development Center (NIDC) has been tasked with updating the national plan for restructuring the steel sector to align with both local and global developments, alongside reviewing relevant policies and regulations to promote sustainability and improve the investment environment.

Al-Khorayef explained that the steel industry has faced significant challenges in recent years, most notably the surplus in rebar production, limited production capacity for high-value steel products used in key industries, and intense competition from imports, which have reached nearly twice the Kingdom's domestic flat steel capacity.

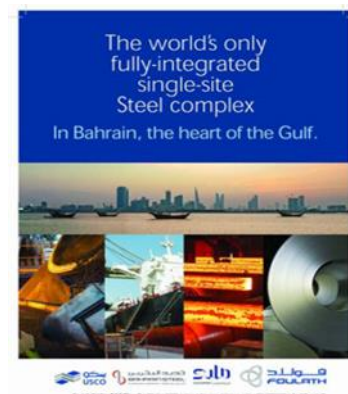
He emphasized that these challenges only strengthened the determination to restructure the sector, bridge production gaps, increase value addition, and ensure the sustainability of supply chains for the domestic, regional, and global economies.

The minister highlighted several major achievements realized recently, including the establishment of Hadeed as an independent national entity specializing in steel products, the expansion into high-value steel products, the creation of Baab Al-Khair Company in partnership with Baosteel (China), Saudi Aramco, and the Public Investment Fund to produce heavy steel plates in Ras Al-Khair, as well as the reoperation of Solb Steel Company in Jazan and the merger of seamless pipe companies into a unified entity to enhance productivity and competitiveness.

Al-Khorayef urged companies in the sector to cooperate in implementing strategic recommendations, including the establishment of a Steel Academy to train national talent and the creation of a national company for importing and supplying scrap metal, given its direct impact on cost efficiency and sectoral growth.

He further noted that the sector is expected to continue its shift toward high-impact industries and high-value products, investing in advanced technologies that align with the Kingdom's current economic momentum and enhance the global competitiveness of its exports.

Al-Khorayef pointed out that the steel sector holds a leading position globally in the market value of manufactured metals, making it a cornerstone of industrial supply chains. Recognizing this importance, the National Plan for the Restructuring of the Steel Sector was approved in August 2024, serving as a roadmap for the development, empowerment, and sustainability of the industry in line with global transformations.



## National Committee for the Steel Industry: Demand Shows Positive Growth and Expected to Continue

Bandar Al-Sulaim, Chairman of the National Committee for the Steel Industry, stated that demand for steel products in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world has witnessed positive growth in recent years.

In an interview with Argaam, Al-Sulaim expressed optimism that this momentum will continue in the coming years, supported by the mega projects associated with Saudi Vision 2030.

He explained that steel demand in the Arab world increased by 8.2% between 2022 and 2024.

Al-Sulaim added that projects such as Diriyah, NEOM, and the Red Sea, along with Saudi Arabia's hosting of major global events — including the AFC Asian Cup 2027, the FIFA World Cup 2034, and Expo 2030 — will all contribute to boosting demand for steel products in the domestic market in the coming years.

Regarding exports, he noted that Gulf and Arab markets are attractive destinations, as there are already strong trade and export relationships between several Saudi steel producers and regional countries. He added that demand in these markets remains healthy and stable.

## UAE launches anti-dumping investigation into Chinese steel sections

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Trade has initiated an anti-dumping investigation into imports of heavy steel sections from China, following a complaint filed by Emirates Steel, the sole local producer of these products. The complaint alleges that Chinese exporters are selling their products at prices below their normal value in the domestic market, causing harm to the UAE steel industry, including declines in prices, profits, and market share. The investigation covers U-, I-, and H-beams, as well as alloy steel angles classified under HS codes 721631, 721632, 721633, and 722870, primarily used in the construction and infrastructure sectors. The investigation is seen as a response to pressure from domestic producers concerned about low-priced imports, while importers emphasize that the UAE remains committed to free trade and fair competition, pending the outcome of the investigation.

## UAE Extends 10% import tax for Rebar Until October 2026

The customs authorities in the United Arab Emirates have extended the implementation of the decision to raise customs duties on rebar and wire rod from 5% to 10%, with the measure remaining in effect until October 12, 2026. The decision was issued through Dubai Customs Circular No. 14/2025, based on the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security's letter No. 99/44742 dated July 14, 2025, which referred to the Ministry of Finance's letter No. 033146/7/2025 dated July 1, 2025. It also draws on the outcomes of the 123rd meeting of the Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee held on June 1, 2025, which approved the extension of the customs duty increase on key iron products. According to the announcement, the extension took effect on October 9, 2025, and will continue until the specified end date next year. The measure aims to regulate the local market and protect the national industry from global price fluctuations in iron products. The products subject to the tariff fall under the following customs codes: 72131000, 721320000, 72139100, 72139900, 72141010, 72141020, 72141090, 72142010, 72142020, 72142090, 72143010, 72143020.



## Al-Ittefaq Steel: No Slowdown in Demand; Scrap Prices Continue to Rise Amid Shortage

Jassim Al-Abbas, General Manager of Marketing, Sales, and Business Development at Al-Ittefaq Steel, confirmed that domestic steel demand in Saudi Arabia stands at around 7.5 million tons annually, while the total installed production capacity of all steel plants in the Kingdom is approximately 15 million tons per year.

Speaking to *Argaam* on the sidelines of the 3rd Saudi International Iron and Steel Conference, Al-Abbas stated that there is no slowdown in domestic demand, contrary to market perception. He explained that demand is growing at an annual rate of 2%–3%, adding that new production capacities have captured part of the market share from existing mills, creating a false impression of weaker demand, while actual demand remains stable and balanced.

He added that rebar demand covers all project types, including mega and giga projects under Saudi Vision 2030, as well as private and investment projects.

### Rising Scrap Prices and Limited Supply

Al-Abbas noted that scrap prices in Saudi Arabia are among the highest in the Middle East, often surpassing global levels, due to limited supply and strong demand. He said the market is witnessing persistent tightness and continuous price increases, expecting further pressure in the coming years as new mills relying on domestic scrap enter production in 2025. He warned that the continued ban on scrap imports would keep the market under sustained pressure.

### Cost Gap Between Large and Small Mills

Regarding market competition, Al-Abbas explained that the sector shows a clear divide between large, capital-intensive mills and smaller, low-cost producers, creating a significant cost gap. Some small mills, he added, import steel billets at prices lower than local production costs, allowing them to sell at lower prices that pressure major producers and force them to cut prices to stay competitive. This situation, he said, is unhealthy, leading to margin erosion and pushing some companies to break-even levels, ultimately threatening industry stability.

### Export Challenges and Market Restrictions

On exports, Al-Abbas noted that 2025 will be one of the weakest years for exports due to restrictions imposed by target markets, such as Iraq's 30% import tariff on steel, along with exceptional conditions limiting exports to Yemen. He expressed hope for improvement and market reopening soon, pointing out that Canada reduced import quotas this year after Saudi Arabia exported significant volumes last year, while the Syrian market looks promising for future exports. He emphasized that government support for local industries and Saudi trade exhibitions abroad will enhance export growth opportunities.

### Strategic Shift Toward Specialty Steel

Al-Abbas highlighted that Saudi Arabia's steel sector is entering a new strategic phase focused on specialty steel production, used in heavy industries such as shipbuilding and railways. He added that upcoming mega-events such as Expo 2030 and the 2034 FIFA World Cup, along with the release of idle lands, are expected to stimulate construction activity and boost steel demand in the coming period.



### World

#### Steel prices in the third week of October 2025

Global steel product prices showed slight fluctuations during the third week of October 2025, with some products recording limited increases, while others remained stable at previous levels.

According to data obtained by the Arab Iron and Steel Union (AISU), the price of steel scrap (mix 80:20) imported by Turkey from the United States rose to \$353 per ton CFR, an increase of \$3 compared to the previous week. In contrast, the price of iron ore (62%) fell to \$103 per ton CFR Australia, down by \$3 week-on-week.

Meanwhile, billet prices continued their upward trend, with Russian exports reaching \$430–440 per ton FOB, up by \$4, while prices in Turkey and CIS countries increased to \$445–455 per ton CFR, a rise of \$3.

On the other hand, finished steel product prices remained unchanged; Turkish rebar stood at \$545–555 per ton FOB, and wire rod prices in Turkey were stable at \$555–565 per ton FOB.

Similarly, hot-rolled coil prices from Russia remained at \$460–470 per ton FOB, while cold-rolled coil (1 mm) from China stood at \$535–545 per ton FOB.

The following is the steel prices statement in the global markets on 18 October 2025:

Product	Place	Min	Max	Date	w-0-w	
ScrapHMS 1&2(mi x 80:20)	ex,USA,CFR Turkey	353	353	18/10/2025	▲	3
Iron ore Fe 62%	CFR- Australia	103	103	18/10/2025	▼	-3
Billet	FOB Russia	430	440	18/10/2025	▲	4
	Turkey FOB	445	455	18/10/2025	▲	3
Rebar	FOB Turkey	545	555	18/10/2025	-	0
	FOB Ukraine	490	510	18/10/2025	-	0
Wire Rod	FOB Turkey	555	565	18/10/2025	-	0
HR coil	FOB Russia	460	470	18/10/2025	-	0
HR coil 1mm	FOB China	535	545	18/10/2025	-	0

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## Iron Ore Prices Set for Weekly Losses Amid Demand Concerns

Iron ore prices declined on Friday amid growing worries about a slowdown in global demand due to escalating trade tensions between the United States and China.

On the Singapore Exchange, October iron ore futures fell by 0.9% to \$104 per ton as of 10:55 a.m. Mecca time, heading for weekly losses of more than 2%.

Meanwhile, the January 2026 iron ore contract on China's Dalian Commodity Exchange slipped 0.2% to 771 yuan (\$108.19) per ton, deepening its weekly decline to 3.1%.

Prices came under pressure as renewed concerns over China's growth outlook resurfaced, after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to impose an additional 100% tariff on Chinese imports in response to Beijing's tighter restrictions on rare earth exports.

## China's Steel Exports Rise by 9.2% in the First Nine Months of 2025

Data from the General Administration of Customs of China showed that the country's steel exports increased by 9.2% year-on-year during the period from January to September 2025, reaching 87.96 million tons, according to Reuters.

In September alone, Chinese steel companies exported 10.47 million tons, up 10% from the previous month — the highest level in four months. This performance defied expectations that growing protectionist measures against cheap Chinese steel would lead to a decline in export volumes.

Meanwhile, China's iron ore imports totaled 917.69 million tons during the first nine months of the year, roughly unchanged from the same period in 2024.

In September, imports hit a record 116.33 million tons, marking increases of 10.6% month-on-month and 11.7% year-on-year. This kept imports above the 100 million ton threshold for the fourth consecutive month, exceeding analysts' forecasts, which had ranged between 100 and 106 million tons.

The market received strong support from the resumption of operations at Chinese steel mills following restrictions related to the September National Day celebrations. Average daily pig iron output rose to 2.42 million tons by the end of the month, up from 2.4 million tons in August, according to data from Mysteel.

Industry experts noted that the record import levels in September were driven not only by domestic activity but also by steady overseas demand for Chinese steel.

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## Global Steel Demand Expected to Stabilize in 2025 with a Slight Increase in 2026

According to the latest report issued by the World Steel Association (worldsteel) on global steel demand for 2025 and 2026. Global steel demand in 2025 is projected to be flat compared to 2024, reaching about 1,750 million tonnes (Mt). A modest rebound of 1.3% is forecast for 2026, pushing global demand to 1,773 Mt.

Alfonso Hidalgo de Calcerrada, Chief Economist at the Spanish Steel Producers Association (UNESID) and Chair of the worldsteel Economics Committee, commented:

“Despite the significant escalation of the global trade war and ongoing uncertainties, we are cautiously optimistic that global steel demand will bottom out in 2025 and show moderate growth in 2026. This optimism is supported by the resilience of the global economy, continued strong public infrastructure investment in most major economies, and expected easing in financial conditions.”

He added that the expected growth in 2026 will be driven by divergent regional dynamics, including a slowdown in China’s demand decline and robust growth in developing economies such as India, Vietnam, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, alongside the long-awaited recovery of steel demand in Europe.

However, the path ahead is not without challenges. The global manufacturing sector continues to face high production costs and persistent affordability pressures on consumers. Moreover, escalating trade tensions are directly hurting steel demand in economies reliant on exports of steel-intensive goods, such as machinery and automotive components, while geopolitical uncertainties continue to undermine business and consumer confidence across key markets.

### China

China’s steel demand is projected to decline by about 2.0% in 2025, reflecting a moderation of the downward trend seen since 2021, mainly due to the prolonged housing market downturn. In 2026, the decline is expected to slow further to 1.0% as the housing market bottoms out. Risks to this outlook remain on the downside, particularly due to a tougher global trade environment that may weaken manufacturing steel demand and financial pressures on local governments that could constrain infrastructure spending.

### Developing Economies (Excluding China)

Steel demand in the developing world excluding China is forecast to grow strongly by 3.4% in 2025 and 4.7% in 2026, driven mainly by robust growth in India, as well as in several ASEAN and MENA countries.

In India, steel demand is expected to continue its strong momentum with around 9% cumulative growth across 2025 and 2026, supported by expansion across all major steel-using sectors. By 2026, Indian steel demand will be approximately 75 Mt higher than in 2020.

### Africa

For much of the past decade, African steel demand remained relatively flat, hovering around 35–40 Mt. However, since 2023, there has been a marked recovery in construction and steel consumption across the continent. Over the past three years, African steel demand has grown by an average of 5.5% annually, driven particularly by activity in Northern and Eastern Africa. In 2025, demand is estimated to reach around 41 Mt, supported by improving macroeconomic stability, declining inflation volatility, and economic diversification efforts across several African countries. These developments could lay the foundation for a sustained period of growth in steel demand.



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## Central and South America

Steel demand in Central and South America is projected to grow by 5.5% in 2025, led by a double-digit rebound in Argentina — recovering from a more than 30% drop in 2024 — and solid 5.0% growth in Brazil, supported by government-backed social housing programmes.

This expansion is expected to bring the region’s total steel demand to about 50 Mt, still 2 Mt below 2013 levels, highlighting the persistent deindustrialisation trend that has characterised the region since the early 2000s.

## Developed Economies

Steel demand in the developed world is forecast to decline by 0.5% in 2025, marking the fourth consecutive annual decrease since 2021. However, a recovery of 1.5% is expected in 2026 as demand in the EU and US bottoms out and resumes modest growth. In contrast, steel demand in Japan and Korea is expected to remain weak through 2026.

- In the EU and UK, demand is forecast to grow by 1.3% in 2025 and 3.2% in 2026, reflecting the impact of higher infrastructure and defence spending combined with improving macroeconomic conditions, including lower inflation, easier credit, and rising real household incomes.
- In the United States, steel demand is expected to increase by 1.8% in 2025, supported by front-loaded production ahead of tariff changes and continued infrastructure investment. A further 1.8% rise in 2026 is anticipated, driven by pent-up residential demand, private investment, and easing financing conditions. Additional upside potential could come from the implementation of the “One Big Beautiful Bill” stimulus package, which may boost multiple sectors of the US economy.



### Technology

#### SMS Group Modernizes Hot Strip Mill for Salzgitter

German steelmaker Salzgitter has reached a major automation milestone with the implementation of SMS Group's X-Pact Centerline Control system at its seven-stand hot strip mill at Salzgitter Flachstahl GmbH.

The project forms part of a wider modernization package ordered in 2024 aimed at improving product quality and operational stability.

According to SMS Group, the X-Pact Centerline Control system uses smart industrial cameras to detect lateral strip deviations and automatically correct them during rolling. This ensures precise strip alignment and minimizes common issues such as double-rolled edges, tail-end rips, and cobbles. The cameras are built to operate under extreme mill conditions, enabling real-time feedback that maintains optimal strip positioning.

By integrating with Salzgitter's mill automation, the new system reduces manual steering, shortens downtime, and boosts rolling stability. The resulting performance gains include more uniform thickness, smoother surfaces, and consistent mechanical properties. These improvements contribute directly to enhanced process reliability and energy efficiency





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