



Media release

Tuesday, January 31st, 2012

Highly ranked Qatar proves to be a valued investment destination for Australia

NSW Government urges greater NSW-Qatar trade and commerce

The Deputy Premier for New South Wales, the Honourable Mr. Andrew Stoner, MP, who is also the Minister for Trade and Investment and the Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services, calls for stronger business ties between Australia and Qatar.

In line with this, Mr. Stoner has encouraged businesses to take advantage of an upcoming business event focusing on Qatar, being hosted by the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AACCI) on Monday 13th February, 2012.

"Qatar is going through an exciting phase as it prepares to host the 2022 FIFA Soccer World Cup," said Mr. Stoner. "Billions of dollars will be invested in Qatar's economy in the coming decade and we are keen to see NSW companies access business opportunities created by this growth."

Qatar is currently the number one economy in the Arab World (over 22 countries) and ranks 14th in the world for global economic competitiveness, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). This places them three spots ahead of Saudi Arabia (ranked 17th) and six ahead of Australia at 20th.

According to the OECD, Qatar is one of the most prosperous and fastest-growing economies in the world. It cites Qatar's high-quality institutional frameworks (underpinned by highly efficient government institutions, high levels of security and low levels of corruption), efficient goods' market and a stable macroeconomic environment as the foundation for its excellent global standing.

The NSW Deputy Premier also stated, "The Middle East is a growing international business centre and a key market for our State. Our Abu Dhabi office gives NSW a greater capacity to build awareness of our world-class products and our strengths in financial services, infrastructure and construction, education, tourism and financial services."

In keeping with providing highly useful networking business events and opportunities, AACCI is promoting Qatar as an ideal destination within the Arabian Gulf region for Australian investment and business. Two experts will discuss key business and investment opportunities in this attractive Arabian destination.

Elizabeth Gordon, former Australian Trade Commissioner for Qatar and Abu Dhabi, will discuss how Qatar has begun to transform itself since winning the bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, investing up to \$275 billion in infrastructure and housing. She will also provide a general overview of the current economic climate, in addition to market trends in sectors such as infrastructure, construction, finance and housing.

Ms. Gordon was responsible for promoting Australian engagement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar, specializing in construction, for four years. She was also the leader of Austrade's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Infrastructure Network, responsible for informing Australian companies about commercial opportunities and helping them succeed in the region.

The second speaker is Paul Morris, GHD's Global Leader for Property and Buildings. GHD is an international network of engineers, architects and environmental specialists serving clients in the global markets of water, energy and resources, environment, property and transportation. He has extensive knowledge of the Middle East, in particular Qatar and the UAE.

Mr. Morris has also been responsible for establishing GHD's urban development services division in the region. He specializes in project management of multi-disciplinary property development projects, with extensive international experience in master planning, engineering/environmental management and the delivery of property development solutions.

Mr. Morris will also provide a case study of GHD's current activities in the region, such as the Grand Hyatt Resort, Al Bida Tower and larger, more influential, projects such as the Doha Airport Terminal Extension and Al Wakrah Hospital.

So come along and update your knowledge of one of the most attractive business destinations in the world today. The range of business opportunities on offer in Qatar will also significantly benefit Australian business and our economy.

The event is sponsored by the New South Wales Government Department of Trade and Investment. It is being held on Monday February 13th 2012 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Hamilton Room, NSW Trade and Investment Centre, on level 47 of the MLC Centre at 19-29 Martin Place in the Sydney CBD.

Tickets are priced at \$50 for AACCI members and \$75 for non-members.

For further details, please contact Jemima Riley, NSW Executive Officer on (02) 9238 2048, or visit AACCI's Upcoming Events webpage.

www.austarab.com.au/upcoming-events

For media enquiries, please contact:

John Fernando

Director of Communications, Marketing and Events

Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce & Industry

P +61 2 9238 2039 **F** +61 2 9238 6363

E john.fernando@austarab.com.au **W** austarab.com.au **ABN** 61 001 639 452

Address L56, MLC Centre 19-29 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia