



# National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce الغرفة التجارية العربية الأمريكية الوطنية

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## U.S. – ARAB CHAMBER NAMES QATARI DIPLOMAT AS “AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR”

*Ambassador Honoree, H.E. Mohamed Bin Abdulla Al-Rumaihi,  
Announces New Appointment as Qatar’s Deputy Foreign Minister*

*In Award Ceremony, Vincent C. Gray, Mayor of Washington DC,  
Lauds Qatari Ambassador as “One of the Most Effective Diplomats”*



Ambassador Al Rumaihi (left) receives his award from David Hamod, President and CEO of the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce.

Washington, DC - The National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) today named H.E. Mohamed Bin Abdulla Al-Rumaihi, Ambassador of the State of Qatar, as the 2013 "Ambassador of the Year." Upwards of 200 business and government leaders participated in the awards ceremony at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Washington DC, including the Honorable Vincent C. Gray, Mayor of the District of Columbia.

“I am proud to receive this award today from the National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce,” stated Ambassador Al-Rumaihi. “Over the past 40 years, your Chamber has played an important role in promoting U.S. – Arab business, working closely with the Arab League, Arab governments, the U.S. Government and

private sectors on both sides. Through delegations, economic forums, business-to-business matchmaking and symposia, you are helping to enhance commercial relations and to build



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a better world for future generations in the United States and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.”

David Hamod, the Chamber’s President & CEO, said that Ambassador Al-Rumaihi has done an “outstanding job of representing Qatar’s interests at a time of considerable change in U.S. – Arab relations. The State of Qatar has been in the spotlight a lot this year – with changes in its leadership, with the pivotal role that it is playing in the Arab Spring, and with the buzz surrounding the [2022 FIFA World Cup](#) – and Ambassador Al-Rumaihi has tackled every issue with candor and grace. His reputation as a ‘no-nonsense straight-shooter’ is very well deserved.”



H.E. Mohamed Al Rumaihi, Qatar Ambassador to the U.S., during his acceptance speech at NUSACC’s 2013 Ambassador of the Year event.

The award ceremony also became a venue for a surprise announcement: Ambassador Al-Rumaihi has just been asked to serve as Qatar’s Deputy Foreign Minister, so he will be leaving Washington DC for Doha very soon. This breaking news gave luncheon attendees an opportunity to congratulate His Excellency on being named “Ambassador of the Year,” but also on his new promotion in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Looking back on his tenure in Washington DC, Ambassador Al-Rumaihi said, “I learned that ambassadors always have problems to solve. These problems may be strategic, political, or economic, and sometimes they deal with public relations issues. In the United States, there is no ‘one-stop-shop’ for tackling these problems. Power and public opinion are diffuse in this country, and there are many stakeholders: government officials, business leaders, civil society, media, think tanks, and academia, to name just a few. As ambassadors, we never know from one day to the next what issues we may face, but we always do our best to find solutions.”

“It has been my great privilege to serve my country as Ambassador to the United States of America,” he noted. “This has been a remarkable experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity to do my part to strengthen the relationship between our two nations.”



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Ambassador Al Rumaihi (center) is flanked by the Hon. Vincent Gray, Mayor of the District of Columbia (right) and David Hamod, NUSACC President & CEO.

Participating in the high-level award ceremony was the Honorable Vincent Gray, Mayor of the District of Columbia. He lauded Ambassador Al-Rumaihi as “one of the most effective diplomats in the nation’s capital, a city that is full of ambassadors.” He shared stories with the audience about how the Qatari ambassador took a personal interest in the welfare of the District of Columbia and how the ambassador helped, officially and unofficially, to strengthen the bonds of friendship and commerce between the two capitals, Doha and DC.

Nowhere was this more apparent, the Mayor said, than in Ambassador Al-Rumaihi’s key role in supporting [CityCenterDC](#), probably the most ambitious urban development project ever undertaken in the District of Columbia. Supported by significant investment from the State of Qatar, CityCenterDC – spread over ten acres in the heart of Washington DC – is composed of 2.5 million square feet of condominiums, apartments, offices, public spaces, hotel, restaurants and shops. Mayor Gray said, “The CityCenterDC project came together in no small part because of the ambassador’s extraordinary skills as a diplomat, negotiator, and consensus-builder.”

Mayor Gray presented the Qatari ambassador with a photograph of the two officials, outfitted in hard hats, inspecting the new CityCenterDC project. The Mayor concluded, “I am very proud to call Mohamed Al-Rumaihi my friend.”

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The ballroom was full of VIPs who turned out for the occasion, including a host of current and former U.S. Government officials. The Honorable Matthew Murray – who has just



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assumed his post as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa – attended the luncheon, his first public event in his new leadership capacity. He said, “I congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Mohamed Al-Rumaihi on receiving the ‘Ambassador of the Year’ award from the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce. The award recognizes the tireless efforts of the Ambassador to deepen U.S. ties with Qatar on all levels and his commitment to increase bilateral trade and investment. The Commerce Department’s International Trade Administration applauds this recognition and the partnership between the Ambassador and NUSACC to promote U.S. trade with Qatar.”

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Sponsors and other VIPs, seated at the head table, extend their congratulations to Ambassador Al Rumaihi at the awards luncheon.

At the end of his formal remarks, Ambassador Al-Rumaihi agreed to take some questions from the audience. On the issue of [Education City](#) under the auspices of the Qatar Foundation, founded by H.H. Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al Misnad, the ambassador highlighted the fact that Education City “gives as much as it gets.” In addition to serving the educational needs of young Qataris, he suggested, Education City serves as a campus and meeting place for dozens of nationalities from around the world. Ambassador Al-Rumaihi highlighted the central role that U.S. institutions of higher learning are playing in Qatar, including such universities as Cornell, Texas A&M, Carnegie Mellon, Georgetown, and Northwestern. The *Financial Times* recently characterized Education City as the “largest educational experiment in the Gulf.”



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On the topic of the [2022 FIFA World Cup](#), Ambassador Al-Rumaihi noted that preparations are moving apace and that Qatar expects to be ready for this global event. Doha is hosting the World Cup, he suggested, but he characterized the event as a “win for the whole Arab world,” which will benefit from the exposure. The 2022 FIFA World Cup is serving as a catalyst for economic development in Qatar, consistent with [Qatar National Vision 2030](#). That country expects to

spend more than \$150 billion on infrastructure projects in coming years, including an estimated \$35 billion rail and metro line, expansion of the new Hamad International Airport, and a \$7 billion seaport, as well as major upgrades in roads, hotels, and housing projects.



According to the Qatar Financial Center Authority, Qatar boasts one of the world’s most dynamic and fastest growing economies, almost tripling in size since 2005 to achieve a nominal Gross Domestic Product of \$192.4 billion last year. According to the International Monetary Fund, Qatar is the world’s wealthiest nation on a per capita GDP basis (2012), and the World Economic Forum’s *Global Competitiveness Report 2013 – 2014* ranks Qatar thirteenth in the world and #1 in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.



Qatar’s ambitious plans to serve as a center of hospitality, sports, and tourism is underpinned by [Qatar Airways](#), a world-class airline that has been named “Airline of the Year” on multiple occasions by Skytrax. Qatar Airways currently serves four

cities in the United States – Washington DC, New York, Houston, and Chicago – and it is scheduled to open up three new U.S. destinations in 2014 (Dallas/Ft. Worth, Miami, and Philadelphia).

[Qatar Airways](#) served as a sponsor of the “Ambassador of the Year” luncheon, as did [Black & Veatch](#), [Boeing](#), [Booz | Allen | Hamilton](#), [CH2M Hill](#), [Crowell Moring](#), [ExxonMobil](#), [Occidental Petroleum Corporation](#), and [Townsend Vision](#). (The National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce thanks these sponsors, without whose generous financial support the luncheon would not have been possible.)

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NUSACC’s “Ambassador of the Year Award,” now in its ninth year, has been bestowed on top diplomats from Egypt, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the United Arab



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Emirates. The only award of its kind, it recognizes Arab ambassadors for their outstanding service in support of U.S. – Arab commercial relations.

Noted Ambassador Al-Rumaihi, “The National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce has played a very helpful role in promoting commercial ties between our business communities. I have witnessed firsthand the high-level activities and the brilliant projects that you carry out on an annual basis.” He concluded, “We in the State of Qatar have a long and strong working relationship with our friends at NUSACC, which reflects my nation’s vital and expanding business and economic relations with the United States of America.”



*The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, widely regarded as the voice of American business in the Arab world, is in touch with business communities across the United States and serves as the U.S. point of contact for the national chambers of commerce in the 22 Arab nations. On a daily basis, NUSACC works closely with leaders throughout the Arab world, as well as high-level decision makers in the U.S. business community, public policy research centers, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the U.S. Government.*