



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

U.S. – Arab Chamber Supports World Chambers Congress in Doha, Qatar

First-Ever Event in the Middle East Promotes Peace Through Economic Growth and Stability

DOHA, QATAR – The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) participated in the opening ceremonies and workshop panels of the 8th World Chambers Congress (WCC), convened in Doha, Qatar. Held for the first time ever in an Arab country, this year's World Chambers Congress broke past records for attendance, hosting over 2,100 delegates from more than 140 countries. The WCC brought together chamber of commerce officials and business leaders to share, learn, and build new networks of opportunity. Numerous U.S. companies were recruited to attend the WCC by the National U.S.–Arab Chamber of Commerce, which was represented by its Executive Vice President, Curtis Silvers.



H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Deputy Emir and Heir Apparent of the State of Qatar attends the WCC opening ceremony.

Over four days, the Congress featured a wide-ranging program of workshops, plenaries, and networking opportunities, all designed to build a stronger global chamber community. Organized by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the ICC World Chambers Federation, and the Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (QCCI), this year's event was held at the Qatar National Convention Center, the region's first gold-certified LEED convention center.



Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim bin Mohammed Al-Thani, QCCI Chairman, welcomes delegates to the 2013 World Chambers Congress.

The opening ceremony of the Congress was attended by H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Deputy Emir and Heir Apparent of the State of Qatar. In addition, H.E. Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim bin Mohammed Al-Thani, Chairman of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, welcomed delegates at the opening ceremony and

stressed the importance of the WCC to help support social stability and economic opportunity for all. Sheikh Khalifa stated, "For sustainable development, economic stability, and social justice for all the people of the world, for meaningful free trade to achieve values of goodness and human



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dignity for all, and to open prospects for new employment opportunities for millions of job seekers, the 8th World Chambers Congress convenes under the theme of 'Opportunities for All.'"

United Nations Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon offered a televised welcome to the WCC participants, saying, "Chambers of commerce play a vital role in the world economy. Businesses can make a major difference when they can forge partnerships with governments and civil society." He went on request that businesses use their influence to advance the status of women, an issue that is critical for promoting human rights. Referencing the United Nations' 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development goals, Moon urged business leaders to address poverty, hunger, illness, and inequality in their strategic goals. "I hope your session will inspire you to commit to contributing to a more sustainable future for our world."



U.N. Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon stresses the critical role of chambers of commerce in promoting the 2015 Millennium goals.

H.E. Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari, Qatar's Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage, welcomed delegates at an opening dinner. He noted, "This conference is convened to seek a balance in addressing persistent and emerging global economic and trade-related challenges. I am confident the WCC will be added to the well-known successes of Doha."



H.E. Minister Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari welcomes delegates at the opening dinner.

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NUSACC's Executive Vice President, Curt Silvers, served on an opening panel along with H.E. Abdulrahim Hasan Naqi, Secretary General of the Federation of Gulf Cooperation Council Chambers. Both Chamber leaders told gathered delegates how their organizations cooperate to connect businesses with reputable partners overseas. Silvers recounted recent NUSACC programs to demonstrate the scope of activity and varied partners with whom NUSACC works. Among recent NUSACC programs cited by Silvers were:

- Supporting the Embassy of Jordan to help host His Majesty King Abdullah and his business delegation during the Jordanian monarch's just-completed visit to Washington, DC;



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- Co-hosting a luncheon in Chicago featuring H.E. Mohamed Bin Abdulla Al-Rumaihi, Qatar's Ambassador to the United States, and celebrating Qatar Airways' launch of a new direct route between Doha and Chicago;
- Working with Arab Ambassadors and top U.S. engineering and construction companies to tap into infrastructure opportunities in the region;
- Hosting four U.S. Senior Commercial Officers – based in Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – to connect with companies in the Chicago area;
- Leading executive-level business delegations to such diverse nations as Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Lebanon, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, and Tunisia;
- Hosting companies from the UAE, in cooperation with the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service, in New York, Atlantic City, Minneapolis, Seattle, and Dallas - Ft. Worth;
- Organizing -- under the auspices of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency -- two reverse trade missions from Libya to the United States;
- Co-hosting visits by the Qatar 2022 Supreme Committee leadership to Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle; and,
- Organizing scores of Arab high-tech business leaders to attend NUSACC's annual High Tech Road Show (HTRS), which includes the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas and high-level meetings with leading American high-tech companies in Silicon Valley and Los Angeles.



NUSACC Executive Vice President Curt Silvers and H.E. Abdulrahim Hasan Naqi prepare to address World Chambers Congress delegates in their workshop, "Middle East Speed Connections - Get Networked!"

Mr. Silvers concluded, "Many American companies are eager to connect with partners in the Arab world, and NUSACC plays a leadership role in that process."

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Within the framework of the WCC, the opening day of the World Chambers Congress included a high-level business summit -- the ICC World Trade Agenda Summit -- a major milestone for the ICC World Trade Agenda initiative, which was launched in 2011 in partnership with the Qatar Chamber. Trade policy experts and chamber representatives were invited to participate in the



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Summit to mobilize broad-based support for a proactive role for business in defining global trade priorities. The Summit included a discussion of ten business recommendations for the World Trade Organization (WTO). Speaking on behalf of the WTO, Deputy Director-General Valentine Rugwabiza commented, "The impressive players in this room will be a critical input into how the WTO and its members chart the path to Bali and beyond."



Valentina Rugwabiza, Deputy Director-General of the WTO, urges delegates to consider the WTO recommendations.

In addition to the ICC World Trade Agenda Summit, the WCC included three days of business programs geared toward building new networking relationships, knowledge of cutting-edge best practices, and an in-depth understanding of Qatar, the Middle East business culture, and the economic outlook of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The ICC World Chambers Federation also organized the World Chambers Competition, the only global awards program to recognize the most innovative projects undertaken by chambers from all over the world. The Competition provided a unique opportunity for chambers to showcase originality and ingenuity, demonstrate determination to strengthen SMEs, and to improve services to members.

Congratulating the State of Qatar, the Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and the WCC on a job well done, NUSACC President & CEO, David Hamod, noted, "The hospitality of the Qatari people and the Arab world was on full display in Doha, providing valuable insights into Arab culture and the booming economies of the region. The WCC was a great experience for the more than 2,000 delegates who attended but, even more important, its message of peace through prosperity will resonate around the world for many years to come."

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.