

Saud al-Attiah leads Qatari delegation to ‘Post-War Syria’ session

Qatar participated in a high-level closed discussion session entitled ‘Post-War Syria’, held on the sidelines of the Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in Washington, DC recently. The Qatari delegation was led by Dr Saud bin Abdullah al-Attiah, Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Finance.



Qatar makes impact in strengthening co-operation in Arab capital markets

Qatar’s presidency at the Union of Arab Securities Authorities (UASA) board had great impact in strengthening co-operation and integration frameworks.

This was acknowledged at the 19th annual meeting of the UASA board, which was held on Thursday via video conferencing. In a speech addressed to the participants in the meeting, Dr Tamy bin Ahmad al-Binali, the outgoing UASA president and the the chief executive officer of the Qatar Financial Markets Authority, extended his thanks and appreciation to the UASA members for their support, constructive co-operation and efforts during the presidency of Qatar, which lasted a whole year and had a “great impact” on the success of many joint initiatives and programmes.

Stressing that the past period was full of challenges and opportunities, he however said it was punctuated by joint hard work focused on supporting the financial markets, strengthening co-operation and integration frameworks among them, and developing their performance to remain in the lead, in a way that puts them in the



Dr Tamy bin Ahmad al-Binali, the outgoing president, addressing 19th annual meeting of the UASA board.

rank and forefront of financial markets. During the meeting, the UASA board discussed a report on the work carried out in the period and reviewed a number of memos of the UASA’s General Secretariat regarding the guidelines for issuing Islamic Sukuk in the Arab capital markets, considering the dealings of financial services companies in Arab capital markets with foreign stock exchanges, and considering facilitating the requirements of fulfilling “know your customer” (KYC) due diligence in financial and banking institutions.

The meeting discussed the study of enhancing co-operation in financial technology and cybersecurity risks for the UASA members.

Strong ties between Qatar, UK across various fields: Sheikh Khalifa

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Doha

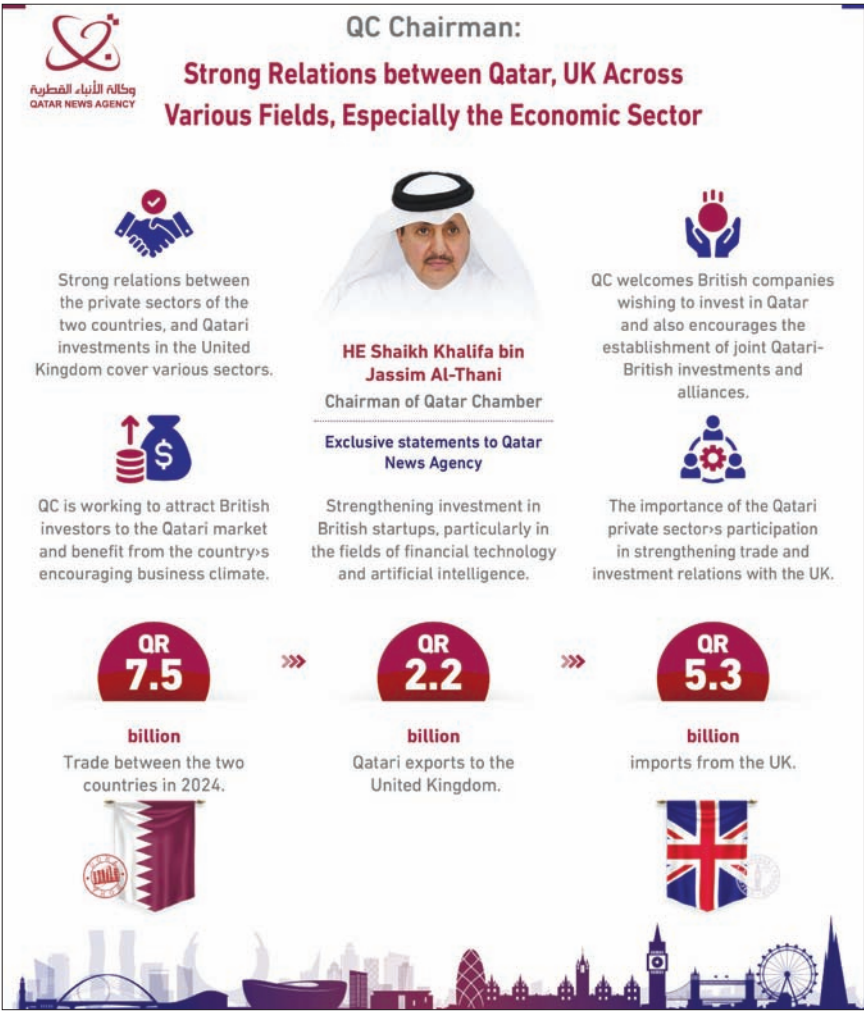
Chairman of Qatar Chamber (QC) Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani praised the distinguished relations between the State of Qatar and the United Kingdom. On the occasion of Doha hosting the second Qatari-UK strategic dialogue, Sheikh Khalifa noted the development of co-operation between the two countries in various fields, particularly commercial and economic. Trade between the two countries reached approximately QR7.5bn in 2024, including QR2.2bn in Qatari exports to the United Kingdom, compared to QR5.3bn in imports from the UK.

In an exclusive statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA), QC chairman noted the strong relations between the Qatari private sector and its British counterpart and the volume and quality of Qatari investments in the UK, which cover various sectors.

He pointed out that there are numerous mutual investments between the private sectors of the two countries, and that Qatari businessmen consider the UK an attractive investment destination.

He stressed that the QC welcomes British companies wishing to invest in Qatar and also encourages the establishment of joint Qatari-British investments and alliances, which would contribute to enhancing bilateral trade. QC is working to attract British investors to the Qatari market and benefit from the country’s encouraging business climate, stimulating laws, and abundant investment opportunities across all sectors, particularly given the presence of world-class infrastructure.

He stressed the importance of the Qatari private sector’s participation in strengthening trade and investment relations with the UK through establishing joint ventures with British companies in areas such as technology, renewable energy, financial services, healthcare, and food industries, and focusing



on sectors that Britain seeks to strengthen after its exit from the EU, such as the green economy and advanced industries.

Sheikh Khalifa also called for increased investment in British startups, particularly

in the fields of financial technology and artificial intelligence, and for the launch of joint business incubators under the umbrella of the chambers of commerce in both countries to support entrepreneurial ideas.

QU recognises Al Fikra entrepreneurship competition winners

QNA
Doha

Qatar University (QU), in partnership with Qatar Development Bank (QDB), concluded the National Entrepreneurship Competition (Al Fikra) for Higher Education 2025.

The event was organised and overseen by the Center for Entrepreneurship at the College of Business and Economics, with support from other entities. Several dignitaries and representatives attended the event.

The competition aims to empower university students in Qatar to develop innovative entrepreneurial ideas and transform them into scalable startup projects, thereby contributing to the advancement of the national entrepreneurship ecosystem and fostering a culture of innovation aligned with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. The competition is considered a prestigious annual platform for discovering and guiding creative talents to serve the

national economy. In his speech during the closing ceremony, Vice-President for Academic Affairs at QU, Prof Ibrahim al-Kaabi, stated: “Al Fikra, The National Entrepreneurship Competition, is more than just a business competition; it is an inspiring space to uncover students’ capabilities in innovative thinking and in developing viable, applicable solutions. Our goal through this competition is to discover and support the entrepreneurial potential of university students in Qatar by providing a nurturing environment to transform ideas into scalable startups that contribute to building a sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem in the country.”

He added: “At QU, we believe that entrepreneurship is built upon inspiring creative thinking and empowering minds to innovate solutions that contribute to shaping a better future. We call for the continuation of this fruitful collaboration with our partners at QDB.” At the conclusion of his remarks, Prof al-Kaabi expressed his deep gratitude to the partners at QDB for their strategic support, which played an effective role in shaping



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and achieving the programme’s objectives. Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship at the College of Business and Economics at QU, Dr Khalid al-Hashmi, also expressed his pride in the continued partnership, saying: “We are proud to continue our collaboration with QDB in this edition of the Al Fikra National Entrepreneurship Competition for Higher Education 2025. This initiative offers a unique opportunity

to foster the spirit of entrepreneurship among students at national universities. It is not just a platform for developing innovative business ideas but a launchpad for a new generation of leaders and change-makers. Commenting on the conclusion of the competition, QDB’s Vice-President of Enterprise Development and Executive Director of Qatar Exports, Khalid Abdulla

al-Mana, stated: “QDB remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering innovation and supporting the development of entrepreneurial ventures, as well as startups and SMEs, in alignment with Qatar’s Third National Development Strategy.”

The competition witnessed the participation of many student teams from various universities across Qatar. The committee received 409 applications from eight universities, representing 117 teams. Of these, 141 applications were accepted to compete in the final rounds. The winning teams were announced and recognised for presenting outstanding and promising ideas with potential impact across diverse economic and social sectors.

The ‘Noor’ project from QU claimed first place with a prize of QR20,000. The ‘GloVoice’ project, also from QU, secured second place with a prize of QR15,000, while the ‘Stay Mobile’ project from the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) achieved third place with a prize of QR10,000.

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Historic opportunity for Europe

Will protectionist measures by the US president, and declining confidence in the US economy, and its financial and academic institutions, present an historic opportunity for Europe?

By Fahad Badar

At the beginning of the year, it appeared that while US assets, especially stocks, were over-valued according to traditional metrics, there were no obvious or compelling alternatives. There needed to be a trigger, or triggers, to prompt significant diversion of investments towards other markets. Now, the triggers exist: The tariff policy and related concerns over US financial governance. These have erupted since President Donald Trump's 'liberation day' on April 2 that pledged very high tariffs on numerous nations. Some of these have been paused, but overall the policy remains protectionist – and unpredictable.

In the second week of April, the phrase 'EM-ification' entered the vocabulary of financial traders to describe the US economy, according to the *Financial Times*. The 'EM' stands for 'emerging market'. The US, with its volatile policy-making, high debt, personality cult surrounding its political leader, has started to exhibit features that traditionally were associated with an under-developed economy with weak institutions, prone to capture by a charismatic leader. Investing in US bonds or stocks is no longer a neutral, safe option. So while it is not unprecedented for the US dollar to show weakness – what is new is that it has fallen when riskier asset prices have also fallen. It is losing its safe haven status. This is a situation that almost no one in the financial markets was expecting as recently as two months ago. The dollar remains by far the most important trading and reserve currency, but some of the features that have sustained this are going into reverse.

Europe has a historic opportunity. The reasons for switching investments from the US to Europe are not only negative ones. In March, the leaders of the likely next coalition government in Germany announced an end to the debt brake as they abandoned the fiscal strictness of the post-Second World War years. The move was approved by Parliament. This was largely a response to the need to fund rearmament programmes, given the pivot away from European security by the Trump administration, and the continuing conflict in Ukraine and perceived threat from Russia's President Putin. But there is likely to be an economic dividend also, with Europe's biggest economy set for fiscal and wider economic expansion. Prospects for economic growth in Europe have improved significantly. In response to the trade war, China has stopped buying Boeing aircraft, which represents an opportunity for its own aviation industry and for Europe's Airbus. Just over a decade ago the euro

hit a major crisis. It had permitted some economies, notably Greece, to become part of the single currency despite insufficient economic convergence and weak controls over borrowing. The austerity programs that followed the crisis were severe, but the problems have been largely overcome. The GDP of the EU is comparable to that of China. In addition to a functioning currency, it has democratic institutions and global companies, notably in pharmaceuticals, banking and aerospace and car manufacture. Growth has been slow but Germany's fiscal stimulus will likely be impactful. A commonly observed weakness of the EU is that, as a constellation of nations, decision-making can be opaque and slow. Yet this perceived weakness may be a hidden strength: it is slower to make good decisions, but also to make poor ones. The US has the opposite problem. So even if a populist leader were to take control of Germany or France, there would be countervailing

forces and the EU could potentially remain a safe haven in financial terms. Turkey, at the juncture of Europe and Asia, is also well positioned for growth and development. It has a growing manufacturing base, a young population and is relatively neutral in geopolitical terms. The US could be losing precious human capital, as well as financial capital. The new President's attacks on the independence of US universities and federal cuts to research funding, have had a major impact. For years the US has led the world in research excellence, and in attracting the finest minds from all over the world, some of whom have become hi-tech business leaders. This could be going into reverse. A staggering 75% of researchers in US universities were considering relocating to other countries, according to a poll in the scientific journal *Nature* in March. The desire to leave was particularly strong among researchers who were early in their careers, where the proportion was nearly 80%.



Some 1,600 researchers were polled in total. In addition, the hostility of the Trump regime towards undocumented migrants creates a sense of fear. There have also been reports in several news media of law-abiding tourists being detained by US customs officials. Perceptions matter. The US has been a financial and human safe haven for many years. Now it appears that it is neither a haven, nor is it safe.

■ The author is a Qatari banker, with many years of experience in the banking sector in senior positions.

Invest Qatar and Iberdrola Innovation Middle East unveil joint report on digital innovation for sustainable future

Invest Qatar, the Investment Promotion Agency of Qatar, and Iberdrola Innovation Middle East have released a joint report, 'Digital Innovation for a Sustainable Future', which highlights the transformative role of digital technologies in advancing energy efficiency, sustainability, and economic diversification.

The report explores key global trends in artificial intelligence (AI), smart grids, cloud computing, and clean technology, offering insights into their potential to accelerate Qatar's digital transformation.

The release of this new report marks the ongoing strategic partnership between Invest Qatar and Iberdrola, building on the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed in May 2022.

The agreement enabled Iberdrola to expand its world-class innovation centre dedicated to advancing the application of AI in the energy sector in Qatar and worldwide. Through the partnership, the Spanish group has expanded its Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) activities via the Doha-based Iberdrola Innovation Middle East, located in Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP).

The centre drives the development of AI-based solutions that enable the transition to an electrified energy system by facilitating the integration of renewable generation and storage, enhancing the planning and operation of digital electrical networks, and empowering customers to actively participate in the energy transition through data-driven decision models.

In this context, the newly released report highlights the transformative impact of emerging technologies, particularly AI, which is projected to generate an annual economic value of \$11-18tn, by revolutionising industries such as energy, logistics,



The report explores key global trends in artificial intelligence, smart grids, cloud computing, and clean technology, offering insights into their potential to accelerate Qatar's digital transformation

and manufacturing. Additionally, the rapid expansion of private 5G networks and hyperscale data centres is reinforcing business competitiveness, as 5G technology is projected to contribute almost \$900bn to the global economy by 2030.

These advancements are reshaping energy efficiency, as smart grids, Internet of Things (IoT), and AI strengthen the resilience and sustainability of power systems. Looking ahead, the shift toward clean technology will require a major workforce transformation, with an estimated 200 million skilled workers required globally by 2050 to support the continued expansion of sustainable energy solutions.

Sheikh Ali Alwaleed al-Thani, CEO of Invest Qatar, said: "In Qatar, we are embracing digital innovation with a balanced approach, ensuring it aligns with our long-

term sustainability goals. By integrating cutting-edge technology with responsible environmental practices, we aim to create opportunities for investors and businesses committed to driving sustainable growth. We believe that digitalisation is not just about enhancing efficiency, but also about shaping a smarter and greener future."

Santiago Bañales, managing director of Iberdrola Innovation Middle East, said: "This report offers timely insight into how digital innovation, particularly AI, is reshaping the energy landscape and accelerating the shift toward more sustainable systems. AI is driving rapid progress across the sector, from enabling smarter grid operations to optimising the use of renewable energy. Yet it also brings growing energy demands, which must be met with clean, efficient sources.

"At Iberdrola Innovation Middle East, we are developing AI-based solutions that not only enhance how we generate and manage energy but also ensure that innovation is sustainable by design. Our ongoing partnership with Invest Qatar reflects a shared commitment to supporting Qatar's transition to a diversified, knowledge-based economy, in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030."

Digital innovation and sustainability are at the core of Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030), focusing on transforming the country into a tech-driven, knowledge-based economy. The Third National Development Strategy (NDS3), launched last year, reinforces the country's ambition to lead in digital innovation and sustainability. This unwavering commitment is reflected in the country's strategic adoption of emerging technologies, significant investment in digital infrastructure and focus on digital skills development.

Peru's minister of foreign affairs in Doha to attract Qatari investments

Ambassador Elmer Schialer Salcedo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, and his accompanying delegation held a meeting yesterday with a Qatar Chamber delegation to discuss ways to strengthen economic and commercial relations. The chamber's delegation comprised Rashid bin Hamad al-Athba, second vice-chairman, and Nasser bin Sulaiman al-Haider, board member. Also present at the meeting was Peru's ambassador to Qatar, Gonzalo Voto Bernales Gatica.

Both sides also explored the investment climate and opportunities in Peru and Qatar during the meeting, where the minister called on Qatari investors to explore the available opportunities in Peru across various sectors and to participate in key exhibitions and events related to agriculture, industry, and food.

During the meeting, the minister affirmed Peru's keen interest in deepening economic and commercial co-operation with Qatar and enhancing business collaboration between the private sectors of both countries. He highlighted the wide range of sectors available for co-operation, particularly in minerals, food security, infrastructure, agriculture, and others.

The minister also noted the presence of many Peruvian products in the Qatari market and expressed his country's eagerness to further increase exports to Qatar,



Ambassador Elmer Schialer Salcedo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, and Qatar Chamber officials – Rashid bin Hamad al-Athba, second vice-chairman, and Nasser bin Sulaiman al-Haider, board member – during a meeting in Doha yesterday.

especially in agricultural, food, and halal products. Al-Athba emphasised the chamber's keenness to strengthen co-operation between business owners from both countries, welcoming partnership and investment collaboration between the Qatari private sector and its Peruvian counterpart. He underscored the importance of organising a joint business forum that would bring together business owners from both sides to explore opportunities for co-operation and partnerships across various sectors.

Al-Haider, meanwhile, stressed the importance of activating the memorandum of understanding signed between the two chambers to enhance co-operation and promote mutual visits between the business sectors of both countries.

Ooredoo Qatar achieves Zscaler MSSP authorisation, expanding its cybersecurity portfolio

Ooredoo Qatar has officially achieved Zscaler Managed Security Service Partner (MSSP) authorisation, a milestone that positions Ooredoo as a leader in delivering cutting-edge managed security solutions, reinforcing its commitment to innovation and digital transformation.

The authorisation enables Ooredoo to offer advanced cloud-based security services, including Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA), Zscaler Private Access (ZPA), and Zscaler Digital Experience (ZDX), to businesses and government entities across Qatar. These services are designed to meet the increasing demand for sophisticated cloud security solutions, as organisations face evolving cybersecurity threats in the digital era.

A partner recognition event to mark the strategic partnership was attended by Thani Ali Al-Malki, chief business officer at Ooredoo, and Saeed Agha, Area vice-president, Emerging Markets at Zscaler, along with senior representatives from both organisations. Al-Malki said: "We are delighted to partner with Zscaler and achieve MSSP authorisation. This collaboration further enhances our ability to provide best-in-class managed security services to our customers.

"By adopting Zscaler's zero-trust solutions, we are empowering enterprises and government entities to securely transition to a cloud-first world, enabling them to focus on growth while we handle their cybersecurity needs."

Agha said: "Completing the Services Authorised journey demonstrates Ooredoo Qatar's deep commitment to delivering exceptional experiences for its customers through the Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange. This designation reflects a rigorous enablement journey that ensures partners are fully



Thani Ali Al-Malki, chief business officer at Ooredoo, and Saeed Agha, Area vice-president, Emerging Markets at Zscaler, during the partner recognition event.

equipped to deliver top-tier cloud security services.

"We are proud to welcome Ooredoo to our elite MSSP ecosystem and look forward to jointly supporting Qatar's digital transformation with innovative, secure, and scalable solutions. Your Digital World secured; with the power of zero trust and AI, Ooredoo and Zscaler will help organisations strengthen and automate IT and security, reduce costs and minimise complexity." The partnership strengthens Ooredoo's position as one of Qatar's most advanced Managed Security Service Providers (MSSPs), enabling it to deliver streamlined, cloud-delivered security solutions designed for a cloud-first, dynamic workforce. In addition, Zscaler's zero-trust framework allows organisations to protect data, applications, and users effectively while reducing operational complexity and costs.

Aligning with Ooredoo's strategic pillar of Innovation and Digital Transformation, this authorisation reaffirms the company's dedication to providing innovative, technology-driven solutions. By addressing critical cybersecurity challenges, Ooredoo continues to empower businesses and government organisations in Qatar to thrive securely in an increasingly interconnected digital landscape.

