



PRESS RELEASE

After successful launch in November

Another Success for the second Networking Event for Financial Professionals.

**Sh.Hanadi reaffirms the commitment to supporting the growth of the Qatari economy and contributing to developing its financial sector
Steve Forbes praises the Qatari Leadership and the country's long term prospects**

Amwal, Qatar Financial Centre and Qatari Businessmen Association held the second Networking Event.

Doha, March 4, 2007 – The three leading local business and financial organizations which have established a local platform for networking and financial industry development held its second event.

The Networking Event for Financial Professionals is geared to professionals working in the financial sector, and those in financial positions in the wider business community. Amwal, Qatar Financial Centre and Qatari Businessmen Association each invite participants from clients and other professional contacts.

The group offers an opportunity for financial professionals to share information on ethics, corporate governance, and best practices in the field of finance among other finance-related topics.

“We were delighted with the great response to our first event” said **Sheikha Hanadi Nasser bin Khaled Al Thani**, Vice Chairperson and Managing Director of Amwal. “The senior level of professionals attending, and the real mix of people across the various businesses not only based in Qatar but also in the region, prompted some very good comments,” she added.

Our survey after the event confirmed that this kind of activity is much needed by the financial community in Qatar. As an economy, and as a community, we are growing quickly and the opportunities for new business are multiplying exponentially. And to illustrate more how quickly we are growing the QFC has issued 15 licenses to new companies since our last event in November. Also we at Amwal have been busy and we will be launching the first **MENA Special Opportunities Fund** in Qatar shortly.

The very fact that Qatar is holding a Conference such as the Forbes CEO Middle East Forum is an indicator of the level of financial and business maturity we have reached.

The financial outlook is bright and we would all I am sure confirm our commitment to supporting the growth of the Qatari economy and contributing to the development of its financial sector. “



The event that was held on 28 February coincided with the conclusion of the Forbes Middle East CEO Forum in Doha. **Steve Forbes**, President, CEO and Editor in Chief of Forbes magazine, attended the event and addressed the participants :

“I think that the measures Qatar have been taking in recent years underscores why the long term prospects of this country are very good. It has recognized that you cannot just depend on oil and gas and that you have to diversify the economy. Everyone pays lip service to education, but Qatar has done far more than others, for instance by bringing in universities such as Georgetown and Carnegie Mellon. This shows seriousness and purpose that I think ensures Qatar’s long time future. We tend to think that oil and gas are natural resources – they are not. The real source of wealth is not physical things, it is metaphysical. It is the brain, and education is essential for bringing out the potential of people’s minds.”

The events will take place quarterly is by invitation only, and will be tailored to fit the needs of the professionals that are expected to participate. In order to do this, the founding groups have already conducted a post-event survey of those who were invited to the first event. This produced some very positive results and confirmed the need for such a body to meet on a quarterly basis.

Notes to Editors

Amwal

Founded in 1998, Amwal is the first investment firm to be licensed by the Central Bank of Qatar operating in three lines of business; investment banking, asset management and financial planning. The firm has launched the first investment portfolio and the first mutual fund investing in the Doha Securities Market and under-wrote the first non-Qatari Initial Public Offering in the country. Amwal has one of the largest investment teams in Qatar, employing more than 50 talented professionals. The firm benefits from a strong shareholder base comprising of major regional and local companies.

Qatar Financial Centre

The Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) is a financial and business centre established by the Government of Qatar and located in Doha. It has been designed to attract international financial services institutions and major multi-national corporations and to encourage participation in the growing market for financial services in Qatar and elsewhere in the region. The QFC operates to international standards and provides a first class legal and business infrastructure for those licensed to operate by the Centre. The QFC was created by Qatar Law No.(7) and has been open for business since 1 May 2005.

QFC Regulatory Authority

The QFC Regulatory Authority is an independent regulatory body established by Article 8 of the QFC Law. It regulates firms that conduct financial services in or from the QFC. It has a broad range of regulatory powers to authorize, supervise and, when necessary, discipline firms and individuals. The QFC Regulatory Authority regulates firms using principle-based legislation of international standard, modeled closely on that used in London and other major financial centers. The Regulatory Authority is currently receiving applications and granting authorisations.



QFC Authority

The QFC Authority is the commercial, administrative and legislative body responsible for driving the commercial strategy of the QFC and for developing relationships with the global corporate community and other key institutions both within and outside of Qatar.

Qatari Businessmen Association

Under the auspices and progressive guidance of H.H. the Emir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Qatari Businessmen Association (QBA) was founded by the ministerial decree no. 14 for the year 2002 as a non-governmental, non-profitable organization. The founding members and all other members of QBA share the same vision of H.H. the Emir in creating a diversified, sustainable and resilient economy. Knowing that the private sector is a main pillar for a robust economy our association serves as a strong catalyst that offers a solid foundation for the economic development of Qatar's private sector and provides a forum for idea exchange. Together, we aim to be a major vehicle, consensus builder and advocate for a thriving economic climate in the State of Qatar.

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