

## Qatar national day

## Regional model for stability, prosperity

Yousef Mohamed Bilal  
AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF  
QATAR

Dec. 18 marks the National Day of the State of Qatar. The Qatari people enthusiastically celebrate this glorious national event to honor the heroes, leaders and people who have contributed to build this country.

Qatar National day is an opportunity to reflect on the heroic sacrifices of the founders, and to adhere to the values and principles upon which our country was founded, and which constitute the basis for the success and progress of Qatar today.

The commemoration of this milestone affords all Qatari nationals the opportunity to recognize the distinction and excellence of their country's rich legacy, to assess the achievements in the modernization process, and to renew allegiance and loyalty

to our wise leadership for working together diligently to ensure a brighter future full of peace and prosperity.

On this auspicious occasion I am honored and privileged to express my most respectful greetings and best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of the Imperial family, the government and friendly people of Japan.

Qatar has always been an excellent model to many countries in the region in terms of the political, economic and social advances. Thanks to our wise leadership, Qatar maintained its position as the world's fastest-growing economy since 2008, with a real GDP compounded annual growth rate of 12.0 percent, and thus providing the highest standard of living and securing a prosperous future for its citizens.

Qatar has proved its strong presence at regional and international arenas by pursuing a balanced foreign policy and insightful visions that enabled it to play



H.H. Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani of the State of Qatar

an active role in resolving and addressing some difficult issues, especially at the regional level. The country has become an active force based on its soft power and moderate diplomacy, and our leadership is determined to maintain its position in the fu-

ture as a key player to contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the region, and the whole world.

Qatar-Japan relations continue to evolve at a rapid pace and gained fresh impetus by the important visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Doha in late August. Prime Minister Abe held talks with H.H. the Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani and Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani. During this visit the two countries agreed to build a "partnership for stability and prosperity," and signed three agreements that will further enhance the already strong bilateral relationship. The first agreement was a policy dialogue between the respective foreign ministries, the second was on cooperation in the field of oil and natural gas, and the third was on acceptance of Qatari trainees in oil and natural gas.

The leaderships of the two countries renewed their commitment to enhance and diver-

sify the bilateral relations, and to expand them beyond the field of energy to encompass other areas such as education, culture, infrastructure, human resources development and technology transfer.

To reaffirm Qatar's keen interest in strengthening the bilateral ties with Japan, Foreign Minister H.E. Dr. Khalid Bin Mohamed Al-Atteyah paid a visit to Tokyo in mid-November, heading a high-level investment delegation that included the public and private sectors, to explore investment opportunities in Japan. Dr. Al-Atteyah held talks with Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, during which the two sides agreed to further enhance the friendly relations and broaden the economic ties.

Dr. Al-Atteyah took advantage of his visit to inspect the functioning of the Qatar Friendship Fund (QFF), the \$100 million fund donated by the State of Qatar to support the victims of the March 2011 disasters in north-eastern Japan.

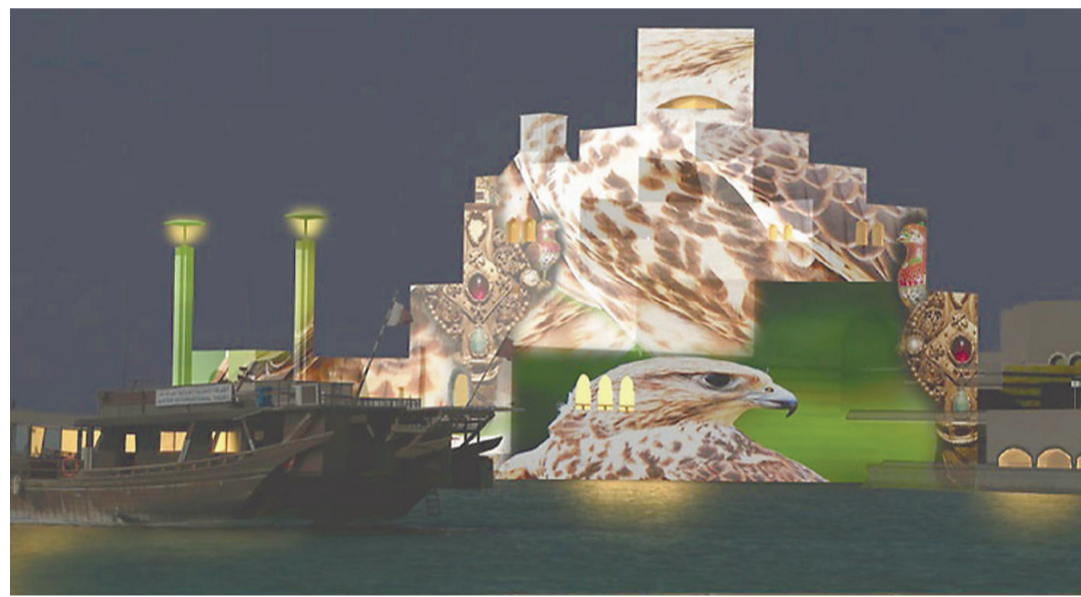
The QFF is working on a total of nine projects in the fisheries, education and health care sectors in the three affected prefectures, Fukushima, Miyagi and Iwate. Several large-scale projects have been completed and are contributing in improving the lives of affected people in these areas. All projects are expected to be accomplished by the end of next year.

We are convinced that, by the joint efforts with our Japanese friends, the upswing in the bilateral relations will continue to acquire more vitality and strength. And we hope that the high-level exchanges between the two countries will continue in the coming years to further deepen and diversify our partnership for the mutual benefit.

In closing I wish to express my deepest appreciation to The Japan Times for giving me this opportunity to address its distinguished readers on this glorious occasion, and I would like to express my best wishes to all for a happy, peaceful and prosperous new year.



Welcome: H.H. Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani shakes hands with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Doha in August. EMBASSY OF QATAR



Culture: The Museum of Islamic Art in the Qatar capital Doha EMBASSY OF QATAR

## Weight of economy, foreign policy is reflected in ties

## Foreign policy

Qatar places increasing emphasis on supporting the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and spares no effort to bring about solidarity, and strengthen ties of mutual trust and communication between Arab countries, propagates the wisdom of resorting to peaceful means in resolving all disputes among countries, approves the U.N. efforts to uphold peace and security, and works to maintain good relations with all peace-loving peoples and countries.

Qatar will remain the "safe haven for all the oppressed," the phrase uttered by the country's founder Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed, and renewed by the new Emir H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, who emphasized Qatar's adherence to its obligations toward its Arab brothers by protecting the oppressed who are demanding freedom, dignity and democracy.

Qatar is committed to fulfill its duties toward Arab cooperation and solidarity in the framework of the GCC and the Arab League and their institutions, and to do all it can to serve the issues of Arab national security, and to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all Arab countries.

Qatar firmly respects the diversity of creeds and respects all religions in our countries and beyond, and rejects any kind of divisions between Arab societies on a sectarian basis. Qatar rejects

and denounces all forms and manifestations of terrorism, regardless of its causes, objectives and means. It, however, differentiates between terrorism and the peoples' struggle, and legitimate rights of freedom and self-determination in accordance with the provisions of international law.

On the international level, Qatar is obliged to maintain and enhance friendly relations with all countries of the world based on shared interests and mutual respect, and to actively contribute to preserve peace, security and prosperity around the world. Qatar works very hard to establish close ties of cooperation with all peace-loving countries and peoples, extends generous financial aid to many developing countries in Asia and Africa, and contributes to various regional and international aid funds to create the widest possible avenues of international cooperation.

## Economy

Qatar was the world's fastest-growing economy during 2008-2011, with a real GDP compounded annual growth rate of 12.0 percent. This rapid growth was mainly driven by the hydrocarbon and services sectors. Real GDP growth in 2012 slowed to 6.2 percent as the moratorium on liquid natural gas (LNG) production reduced hydrocarbon-sector growth.

The current account surplus rose sharply (32.0 percent of



On the waterfront: A view of the Doha Corniche EMBASSY OF QATAR

GDP) on record-high gas and nonoil exports. Strong hydrocarbon revenues and underspending in the capital budget led to a stronger fiscal surplus (13.2 percent of GDP).

The current account surplus is expected to remain high (34.1 percent of GDP on average in 2013-14), as a result of rising manufactured exports such as gas-to-liquids (GTL), petrochemicals and fertilizers.

Qatar National Bank (QNB) forecasts real GDP growth of 6.5

percent in 2013 and 6.8 percent in 2014 as hydrocarbon production remains flat and growth drivers shift toward large-scale infrastructure spending by the government as part of the build-up toward the 2022 World Cup to be held in Qatar.

These infrastructure projects will stimulate buoyant economic activity in construction, financial services and housing. These projects include the construction of the Qatar Rail Development Program, including the Doha metro rail network and the expansion of the road network. Overall, these infrastructure projects are expected to be worth 14.8 percent of GDP each year in 2013 and 2014.

## Business environment

Qatar is the most competitive country in the GCC, according to World Economic Forum (WEF) rankings. The Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014, produced by the WEF, ranked Qatar 13th out of 148 countries. This places Qatar at the top of the GCC. Qatar moved up the rankings significantly for the efficiency of its goods and labor markets. A strong institutional framework with a low level of corruption, high efficiency of government institutions and strong security provides the foundations for market efficiencies. Low taxes are a key driver of market efficiency as, in the goods market, they provide an incentive to invest while in the labor market they help retain talent and provide an incentive to work.

In June 2013, MSCI announced that it would upgrade and reclassify the Qatar bourse's index, giving it "emerging mar-

ket" status. This decision follows initiatives that Qatar Exchange has taken to improve market organization, operational efficiency and regulation, and its implementation of a functional delivery-versus-payment mechanism. The upgrade may also have been influenced by the moves by major Qatar corporations to lift existing ceilings on foreign equity ownership.

As a result of the upgrade, institutional investors managing emerging market portfolios will now try to increase their presence in the Qatari market. Analysts' estimates of the additional capital attracted to the market range widely from \$350 million to \$1 billion.

## Energy resources

Since independence, Qatar's development has been transformational, leveraging its enormous oil and gas wealth to project itself onto the global stage. Qatar has the third-largest gas reserves in the world, estimated at 885.0 trillion cubic feet (tcf), which along with crude oil and condensate reserves equated to around 192.8 billion barrels of oil equivalent (boe) in 2012. With Qatar's population at only 1.8 million in 2012 and nationals accounting for only 14 percent of the total population, hydrocarbon reserves and revenue per national were the highest in the world.

The development of its huge natural gas reserves has made Qatar the largest LNG exporter. Qatar's proven gas reserves are lower only than Russia's and Iran's. At 2012 rates of production, these reserves would last

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### Our Warmest Congratulations to His Highness The Emir, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani

Chiyoda is proud to be a part of the success and prosperity  
of Qatar under the outstanding leadership of His Highness The Emir.



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### Congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani the Emir of the State of Qatar on National Day



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### Congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani the Emir of the State of Qatar on National Day

Japan-Qatar Friendship Association

Chairman: Fumio Kawaguchi

### Congratulations

to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani  
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# Qatar national day

## Promoting bonds of friendship

Fumio Kawaguchi  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-QATAR  
FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the Japan-Qatar Friendship Association, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, emir of the State of Qatar, and the people of Qatar on their 42nd National Day.



2012 was a memorable year because of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Qatar and Japan. 2013 has also become a memorable year with historic events in both countries, in particular, His Highness Sheikh Tamim succeeding His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani as emir of Qatar.

We will never forget the heart-

felt gift of additional supplies of LNG and huge donations, as part of the Qatar Friendship Fund (QFF), which our country received from Qatar during the reigns of His Highness Sheikh Hamad and His Highness Sheikh Tamim. They have become lamps of hope to the reconstruction of Japan.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest respects to the astonishing leadership of His Highness Sheikh Hamad, which brought breakthrough growth and prosperity to Qatar, and I congratulate His Highness Sheikh Tamim on being inaugurated as the emir of Qatar.

I sincerely hope that His Highness Sheikh Hamad as His Highness the Father Emir will continue to graciously provide support and cooperation from a broader perspective also in the future, and that Qatar will continue its prosperity and development under the profound insight

and leadership of His Highness Sheikh Tamim.

In August, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Qatar with a business delegation.

At the Japan-Qatar Business Forum in Doha, the prime minister expressed his intention to deepen cooperation between Qatar and Japan across a broad range of areas, such as political and security matters, economic issues, education, agriculture, medical technology and services, and culture and exchange of personnel, rather than having our relations stay limited to the area of energy.

No one doubts that strong ties based on confidence, friendship and cooperation in a wide range of areas are sure to strengthen in the future.

While Qatar will host the 2022 FIFA Soccer World Cup for the first time in the Arab world, Tokyo will host the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We welcome and appreci-

ate the opportunity to host two of the world's greatest sporting events during much of the same period, which will have major economic effects on Qatar and Japan.

This year, the Al Zubarah Archaeological Site in Qatar, which gave its name to the first LNG vessel to Japan, the Al Zubarah, was inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list together with Mount Fuji.

I cannot help but feel the deep connection between our two countries from such occasions in the sports and cultural fields, which happened at nearly the same time.

Qatar and Japan enjoy a close and growing relationship in spite of the great distance between them. They are tied together by confidence and friendship.

On behalf of the Japan-Qatar Friendship Association, I vow to contribute to strengthening and developing bilateral ties between Qatar and Japan.



## Weight of Qatar's economy, foreign policy

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for at least 160 years.

At the same time, Qatar has been the world's largest LNG exporter since 2006. The extraction of natural gas has also resulted in the production of condensates, which overtook crude oil production in 2012.

As for oil, at the current production rates, reserves are expected to last for at least 39 years. Qatar's proven reserves of crude oil, condensates and NGLs were estimated at 24.0 billion barrels at the end of 2012, about 1.4 percent of proven world oil reserves. Within this, proven crude oil reserves are estimated at around 2.3 billion barrels. Total crude oil, condensates and NGL production in 2012 was around 2.0 million barrels per day, of which 0.7 million bpd was crude oil, and the remainder condensates and NGLs. Qatar accounted for 2.0 percent of world oil production in 2012.

The nonhydrocarbon sector has been supported in recent years by the ramp up in GTL and petrochemicals production.

Qatar also had the highest percentage of millionaire households in the world (14.3 percent). This concentration is likely to increase in the coming years as overall wealth in Qatar is likely to grow faster than in the rest of the world.

The government objective is now to use its huge hydrocarbon wealth to build a diversified and sustainable economy. It envisions that infrastructure investment, education and health will support the development of a more vibrant and services-oriented knowledge economy.

### Bilateral relations

The bilateral relations between the State of Qatar and Japan maintained sound momentum, characterized by mutual trust and respect, and crowned by flourishing trade and economic cooperation.

Our bilateral relations, established in 1972, have grown severalfold in coverage and scale, covering a wide spectrum of political, economic, educational, cultural, scientific and technological cooperation. The friendly ties, however, gained fresh impetus this year by the important visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Doha in late August.

Prime Minister Abe was accompanied by a 200-strong delegation comprising academics, chief executive officers, chairmen and presidents of nearly 50 companies. During his stay in Qatar, the Japanese premier held talks with H.H. the Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani and Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

The two countries agreed to build a "partnership for stabil-



Heritage: Girls wear traditional dresses on Qatar's National Day. EMBASSY OF QATAR

ity and prosperity," and signed a memorandum of understanding between Qatar Petroleum and the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corp. (JOGMEC), and a memorandum of understanding between Qatar Petroleum and Chiyoda Corp. in the field of training, and a memorandum of understanding about the political dialogue between the respective Foreign Ministries.

From the Qatari side, Foreign Minister H.E. Dr. Khalid Bin Mohamed Al-Atteyah visited Tokyo in mid-November, heading a high-level investment delegation, which included the public and private sectors, to explore investment opportunities in Japan. Dr. Al-Atteyah held talks with Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, during which the two sides reconfirmed their commitment to further strengthen the friendly relations. The two sides agreed on the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation in business investment, energy supplies and infrastructure development. During the meetings the Qatar side reaffirmed its commitment to ensure stable supplies of natural gas and oil to Japan.

The vibrant economic ties between the two countries are the mainstay of our strong relations of friendship and cooperation, with trade and investment in energy constituting the backbone of our strategic economic ties.

Japanese companies are active players in Qatar's energy sector. Their partnerships with Qatar include LNG and refinery ventures, power plants, exploration, development and production-sharing agreements, as well as engineering and construction.

Japan is Qatar's largest trading partner with a total volume of more than \$37 billion in 2012. Qatar is Japan's second-largest LNG supplier and is also Japan's third-largest supplier of crude oil. Qatar is committed to Ja-

pan's energy security by ensuring reliable LNG supplies. The two countries are working to expand the scope of the bilateral relations by including other sectors like medical, educational services and infrastructure development.

### Qatar Friendship Fund

The Qatar Friendship Fund (QFF) is a gift of friendship from Qatar to Japan, \$100 million donated by the State of Qatar to support the people affected by the March 2011 disasters in northeastern Japan.

In addition to building a strong friendship between Japanese and Qatari people, the priority goal of the QFF is to provide

prompt and effective assistance as directly as possible to victims of the disasters, through rehabilitation and reconstruction development projects that are not funded by any other sources.

The QFF supports projects that address urgent, crucial and sustainable needs for the greatest number of beneficiaries. It is working on a total of nine projects in the fisheries, education and health care sectors in the three affected prefectures, Fukushima, Miyagi and Iwate. Several large-scale projects have been completed and are contributing to improving the lives of people in these areas. All projects are expected to be completed by the end of next year.



Celebrations: People march to mark Qatar's National Day on Dec. 18 last year. EMBASSY OF QATAR



Congratulations on the National Day  
to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani  
the Emir of the State of Qatar



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Fly past: Aircraft perform during a National Day celebration Dec. 18, 2012. EMBASSY OF QATAR