

QATAR



bridges BY SYNERGY MEDIA SPECIALISTS

www.sms-bridges.com



Japanese Ambassador to Qatar Satoshi Maeda presents his credentials to His Highness the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

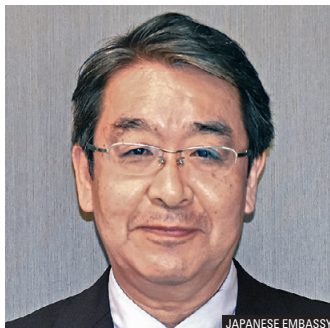
Five decades of Qatar-Japan ties

Satoshi Maeda, ambassador of Japan to the State of Qatar, shares his insights on half a century of Qatari-Japanese relations

“Last year marked the 50th anniversary of our bilateral relations with Qatar, and those 50 years were characterized by mutual trust and fruitful cooperation at all times.

“Japan and Qatar have steadily developed their relationship over the past half century, especially in the energy sector. The stable supply of liquefied natural gas, as well as oil, from Qatar has supported Japan’s economic growth for many years.

“Economic exchange has been the backbone of our relationship for more than five decades. Thanks to the strong political will of both countries and the comprehensive partnership based on our cooperative relationship, solid foundations for bilat-



Ambassador Satoshi Maeda

eral cooperation have been established. These continue in various fields, not only in economic cooperation, but also in the cultural, technical, scientific, defense and security fields.”

Read the full interview here: <http://bit.ly/QAJP-bridges>

A driving force in Qatar and the region

Group CEO Abdulla Mubarak Al-Khalifa speaks about Qatar National Bank’s role in Qatar’s economic growth

Bridges: How is QNB supporting Qatar’s development?

Despite several macro-economic headwinds, Qatar demonstrated resilience and was well positioned to weather those challenges. At the same time, Qatar demonstrated robust economic performance and took the necessary policy steps to ensure medium- to long-term growth.

Qatar introduced the Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) with the aim of transforming the country’s economy into one that is knowledge-based. QNV 2030 aims to foster human, social, economic and environmental development. This diversification is driven by a major infrastructure and investment spending program that is also helping to deliver the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ and nurture private-sector engagement.

At the same time, Qatar applied a prudent fiscal policy to ensure economic growth, balancing revenues and expenditures, advancing structural policy reforms and building the necessary buffers to mitigate volatility from external shocks. Qatar also strengthened its position as a hub for further expansion into the Middle East and Africa region. Structural policy reforms were implemented and new laws were ratified to enhance the

attractiveness of doing business in Qatar and promote foreign direct investment.

Furthermore, Qatar decided to increase its liquefied natural gas (LNG) production by 64% by 2027 in order to maintain its position as the world’s largest LNG exporter. The North Field is the world’s largest gas field.

QNB remains committed to supporting and contributing actively to the growth and development of the State of Qatar, as a financial intermediary. With this in mind, QNB contributes to the QNV 2030 through its participation in major infrastructure financing to drive the diversification of the economy toward a knowledge-based economy.

The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ continues to drive momentum. We see ourselves as a driving force behind a wide range of significant projects related to the event, providing comprehensive solutions across the entire value chain.

Furthermore, QNB continues to act as an incubator to nurture private-sector development and engagement with the country. We consider ourselves to be a one-stop shop for small- and medium-sized businesses in the market, a segment that provides a significant contribution to the country’s economy and growth.

We played a significant role in supporting the diversifica-

tion of the economy by continuing to strengthen our sustainability engagements. This demonstrates our commitment to promoting sustainable financing practices and emphasizes our engagements in green buildings, renewable energy, clean transportation and pollution prevention.

What strategies has QNB put in place to address global challenges?

COVID-19 has changed our way of life, both in our individual and corporate environment. As such, we believe that these changes are shaping the new norm across our economic and social landscape.

This new norm also led us to revisit and review our corporate strategy. We developed a new five-year plan which again affirms our aspiration to be a leading Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia (MEASEA) bank and maintaining our No. 1 ranking in the Middle East and Africa. Being ambitious but realistic, we aim to further foster our core value proposition as an international wholesale bank while leveraging innovation as a strategic enabler.

Changes in customer behavior lead to a shift from brick and mortar to more convenient and remote channels. This trend has accelerated the drive towards digitization and automation, which ultimately



Abdulla Mubarak Al-Khalifa, CEO of the QNB Group

impacts the banks’ business and operating models.

Finally, the current emphasis and focus on climate change is expected to impact banks’ portfolios, balance sheets and operations.

We expect that delivering our strategy will allow us to continue to create long-term profitable growth and deliver sustainable value while at the same time enabling us to respond swiftly to future global economic challenges.

What does the future hold for QNB?

As part of our vision and strategy, we aim to expand internationally through organic and inorganic growth while maintaining our leading position domestically.

Our objective is to capture market share and risk-adjusted returns in markets that demonstrate strong macroeconomic and banking-sector growth. Highlights of our international expansion were the acquisitions of QNB Finansbank in Turkey as well

as QNB Alahli in Egypt. This year, we continued to expand our international presence by opening a branch in Hong Kong.

We aim to strengthen our position in markets we have already entered, notably in Southeast Asia, as those markets are at different stages of development but offer immense growth opportunities and potential. We do not limit ourselves only to organic and inorganic growth opportunities, but also actively pursue strategic partnerships and alliances. We have concluded a number of strategic partnerships, such as our strategic partnerships with Visa and FIFA as the official regional Middle East and Africa supporter of the World Cup Qatar 2022™.

With Qatar and Japan recently celebrating 50 years, what message would you like to share with our readers?

The 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Qatar marks

a significant milestone in the relationship between our countries. We share strong and long-lasting economic ties as Japan is one of the most important trading partners for our country. Several Japanese companies are interacting with and operating in Qatar. They are active in the execution of large-scale projects, in our preparation to host the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, as well as in supporting the development of our country at large. QNB today is the largest financial institution in the Middle East and Africa and one of the leading banks in MEASEA. Our network, rating, brand and relationships make us a strong, reliable and trusted partner for the banking needs of our clients. Our extensive market knowledge and experience helps us to support not only large local and multinational corporations, but also small- and medium-sized enterprises seeking a trusted financial partner to provide sophisticated and tailored solutions.

We have also established strong and growing relationships with leading Japanese banks across all our activities. This allows us to facilitate financing opportunities for trade, infrastructure and investment flows on a bilateral basis. We look forward to those ties evolving and prospering in a mutually beneficial way in the fields of commercial, industry and trade, health care, education, infrastructure and investment for the benefit of our customers and partners. ♦ qnb.com