

# QATAR



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## Beyond five decades: Nurturing enduring ties between Qatar and Japan

Qatar and Japan have been important bilateral partners for over 50 years, with cooperation across vital areas growing more robust over time. Ambassador of Japan to the State of Qatar Satoshi Maeda delves into some key points

Japan and Qatar have steadily developed their relationship on mutual trust and friendship, and the stable supply of liquefied natural gas and oil from Qatar has supported Japan's economic growth for a long time. Since the 1990s, Japanese companies have contributed to the full-scale construction of LNG production plants in Qatar, which is among the major crude oil suppliers to Japan. In recent years, the volume of trade between the two countries has likewise increased.

As the global movement toward the realization of a green society accelerates ... it's important to expand cooperation with Qatar in the field of clean energy.

Qatar is an extremely important partner not only for Japan's energy security, but also in the international arena on the political and economic fronts. Qatar, like Japan, employs omni-directional diplomacy as its primary diplomatic strategy. There is growing momentum to promote security cooperation, too.

Cultural exchange has also long been a focus in our relations ... promoting Japanese culture in Qatar through various endeavors. People-to-people exchanges



Satoshi Maeda, Japanese Ambassador to the State of Qatar

are also important. For many years, the embassy has been offering Japanese government-sponsored scholarships to Qatari students. There is likewise collaboration between individual universities to enhance scientific, academic and research cooperation. Culture is one of the pillars of Qatar's National Vision 2030, which Japan supports in both the public and private sectors. ♦

Read the full story here: <https://bit.ly/QAJP23>

## QNB Group: Bolstering regional growth, propelling Qatar National Vision 2030

Bridges recently spoke with QNB Group CEO Abdulla Mubarak Al-Khalifa about the latest developments in the bank's robust role as a regional financial leader and its efforts to propel Qatar National Vision 2030

**Bridges: How does QNB envision its role evolving within the transformative landscape of Qatar National Vision 2030?**

**Abdulla Mubarak Al-Khalifa:** Qatar introduced the Qatar National Vision 2030 with the aim of transforming the country into a knowledge-based economy by fostering human, social, economic and environmental development. A major infrastructure and investment spending program that nurtures private-sector engagement drives this diversification. Qatar is also undergoing structural policy reforms to enhance the attractiveness of doing business there and to promote foreign direct investment.

Furthermore, through the expansion of the North Field, the world's largest gas field, Qatar will increase its production of liquefied natural gas by 64% by 2027, maintaining its position as the world's largest LNG exporter.

As a financial intermediary, QNB remains committed to the growth and development of the State of Qatar. It contributes to QNV 2030 through its participation in financing and financial intermediation activities that drive economic diversification toward a knowledge-based economy.

Furthermore, as a one-stop shop for small and midsize enterprises, a segment that contributes

significantly to the country's economy and growth, QNB acts as an incubator, nurturing private-sector development and engagement in the country.



Abdulla Mubarak Al-Khalifa, CEO, QNB Group

We also play a significant role in supporting diversification of the economy by strengthening our sustainability engagements. This demonstrates our commitment to sustainable financing practices and emphasizes our participation in green buildings, renewable energy, clean transportation and pollution prevention.

**What are the bank's key strategies on staying current**

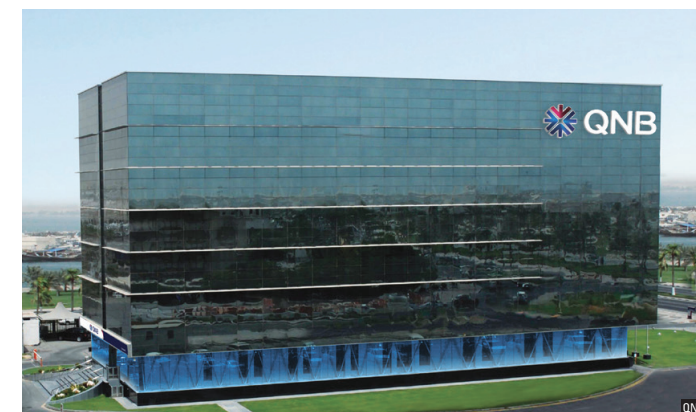
**with customer behavior, digitization and climate change?**

QNB aspires to be among the leading Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia (MEASEA) banks while maintaining its leading position in the Middle East and Africa. Our strategy comprises three elements: focus on our core of being an international wholesale bank, leveraging innovation as a strategic enabler and embedding sustainability into our business and operating model.

Focusing on our core means further uplifting our wholesale banking capabilities across our network to tackle these challenges. QNB aims to provide the highest-quality customer service and product offerings to meet our customers' evolving financial needs.

The second element is to leverage innovation as a strategic enabler. Our innovation strategies capitalize on developments in areas like open banking, robotics, data and analytics, artificial intelligence, digitalization, and automation, benefiting the bank and all our stakeholders. This addresses changes in customer behaviors and the entry of new competitors.

Thirdly, our strategy aims to embed sustainable practices across our business and operating model, propped up by three



The QNB Group today is the largest financial institution in the Middle East and Africa and one of the leading banks in MEASEA.

pillars that support QNB's goal of sustainable financial performance: sustainable finance, sustainable operations and "beyond banking." These pillars strengthen our overall governance framework and approach, mitigate our environmental and social risks, and make a positive contribution to the societies in which we are present.

**What is the bank's strategic focus for expanding its international presence to align with the overarching objectives of becoming a leading MEASEA bank?**

We aim to expand internationally through organic and inorganic growth while maintaining our leading position domestically. Our objective is to capture relevant market share and risk-adjusted returns in markets demonstrating strong macroeconomic and banking-sector growth. Our international expansion focuses on the Middle East and Africa and on high-growth economies in Southeast Asia.

Across our international branch network and in line with our international expansion strategy, we've seen significant growth in London, Paris, Singapore and Hong Kong. These financial centers have allowed us to capture market share with global and multinational corporate customers, fueling our growth. Besides serving them with opportunities for trade and investments across our international network, we've captured business opportunities in supporting their transition toward a carbon-neutral future.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the biggest market in the Gulf Cooperation Council, is likewise a significant component of our international expansion strategy, with immense potential to contribute to QNB's future business growth. Our focus is to serve mainly domestic and multinational corporates as one of the leading foreign banks while promoting our unique access to the MEASEA region and major global financial hubs.

**How does the long-standing diplomatic relationship between Japan and Qatar align with QNB's strategies for growth and global engagement?**

Japan and Qatar share strong, long-lasting economic ties; Japan is among our country's most important trading partners. Several Japanese companies interact with and operate in Qatar, and are active in the execution of large-scale projects in infrastructure and energy, all of which support the overall development of our country. Recently, cooperation between Japan and Qatar has expanded beyond energy and infrastructure to the fields of research and development, science and education, agriculture, tourism and culture, further strengthening our bilateral relationship.

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 help us support local and multinational corporations, as well as SMEs seeking a trusted financial partner to provide sophisticated and tailored solutions.

We've 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, to benefit of our customers and partners. ♦ [www.qnb.com](http://www.qnb.com)