

In Focus – Qatar

March 2011

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So, what does a tiny oil rich nation with worlds largest reserves of LNG (liquefied natural gas) do with its wealth? It builds a future by educating its people, providing access to the best training and medicine available, and builds an infrastructure to be proud of. This historical nation has certainly earned its place in history. As a result of the incredible growth in Qatar, businesses locally and from around the globe have enjoyed gains.

Al Tamimi & Company has recognized the opportunity for growth in Qatar and has been taking steps to further strengthen its position as a top law firm in Qatar. In December, Jay Fortin joined Al Tamimi & Company International as a Partner and the head of the Qatar office. Formerly of Patton Boggs, Jay has a wealth of legal experience internationally and within the GCC region. He has taken great steps in setting up a solid approach to expand our presence in Qatar.

With the growth Al Tamimi is experiencing in Qatar, it has been decided that Al Tamimi will be moving its current office to a more centralized area in the main business district of Doha. Having now identified several suitable QFC approved buildings, which will accommodate our growing team, we have engaged several contractors to design and bid our fit out costs. The expected move should take place later this year.

Our current staff consists of a dynamic team that brings a multitude of experience to both Al Tamimi and the clients we serve. Our current team is: Ahmed El Amoury, Karim Shiyab, Veronica Oryem, Jay Fortin, Sarah Lisgo, Ahmed Jaafir, Manal Aloush, Kamal Hafez, Sami Fakhoury, Wong Yuen Ping, Sharifah Hamzah, Stefan Jury, Frank Lucente & Hani Al Naddaf.

The recent recruitment of Semi Fakhoury further exemplifies the commitment that Al Tamimi has for Qatar. Mr. Fakhoury come to to Al Tamimi from a top French Law Firm, Gide Loyrette Nouel where he was a Partner. Mr. Fakhoury specializes in structured and project finance and has expertise across a wide range of financing transactions including acquisition; project, syndicated lending and asset based finance and has represented borrowers and lenders in large European and cross-border LBO transactions. He has also represented major French listed and non-listed companies in debt restructuring and syndicated lending and has advised leading Middle East groups on project finance transactions and infrastructure acquisitions as well as leading banks and financial institutions on cross border export financing across the MENA region. He will utilize his significant experience in the Middle East to maintain Al Tamimi's position as one of the leading finance firms in Qatar and extend our further growth here.

The month of February brought good news with the appointment of three partners, two of which are in the Qatar office; Mr. Stefan Jury and Mr. Hani Al Naddaf. Stefan, a native of Australia, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the firm with a specialty in Banking & Finance. Hani, a native of Syria, who speaks Arabic, French and English, has become a top litigator for Al Tamimi & Company, and in Qatar. Well deserved appointments for these worthy individuals; Congratulations.

Al Tamimi has positioned itself well in Qatar as a key law firm with expertise in local laws, with international experience. As the country is in the process of rebuilding its airport and building cities within the City, that will combine the best of Qatar's rich history, and the modern day wealth and convenience of what Qatar has to offer today, as a result of this, Al Tamimi continues to be appointed to some of the most high profile and complex deals as companies have found our team in Qatar is un-matched.

Doha will soon be home to one of the most advanced medical centers in the world that will also be a learning hospital employing and producing some of the best doctors globally. This tiny nation is also home to the largest foreign United States Air Base.

Al Tamimi Qatar has been involved in many different political and business forum events since the beginning of the year. During the second week of January, Turkish Prime Minister, The Honorable Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan was in Qatar to remind the world that the relationship between Qatar and Turkey is solid at all levels. The US Secretary of State, Mrs. Hillary Clinton was also in Doha as part of a regional trip.

Al Tamimi representatives also participated in a closed dinner meeting with a select business consortium that traveled to Qatar, Kuwait and Turkey, accompanied by the Argentinean President, Ms. Christina Fernandez. The tour is meant to strengthen ties with countries in the region. The Emir of Qatar and Ms. Fernandez have been working together to boost trade between the two countries and within the region over the last year.

Qatar is certainly on the rise, and should see significant growth over the next 10 to 20 years. Al Tamimi & Company has been and continues to grow with Qatar, the team in Doha has firmly established itself as leaders in the legal field, and as a result, Al Tamimi continues to show steady growth and continues to build its dynamic legal team.