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Qatar- Emir's visit cements ties with Singapore

Date

10/17/2017 6:31:41 PM

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(MENAFN - The Peninsula) QNA

Singapore: Emir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong attended at the Istana Presidential Palace yesterday the signing of a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs) between

the governments of the two countries.

The Emir and the Singaporean Prime Minister attended the signing of an agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investment that aims at creating an investment climate and favourable conditions for investments and strengthening its protection and a partnership agreement between the Gulf Studies Center at Qatar University and the Middle East Institute at the National University of Singapore with funding from Qatar Development Fund (QDF). The two sides shall promote research and development activities in accordance with their respective needs and objectives.

They also attended the signing of a MoU between Qatar Investment Authority and the Civil Service College and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Legal and Judicial Studies Centre at the Ministry of Justice in the State of Qatar and the Singapore Academy of Law for cooperation in all legal, academic and professional fields.

They also attended the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for judicial cooperation between the Supreme Judiciary Council of the State of Qatar and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Singapore for the sustainability of cooperation and interaction between the two parties and a Memorandum of Understanding for judicial cooperation between Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre and the Supreme Court of Singapore for cooperation within the framework of experiences' exchange and discussion of issues of mutual interest, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the financial provisions between the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre and the Supreme Court of Singapore.

Their Excellencies members of the official delegation accompanying the Emir attended the signing ceremony. On the Singaporean side, it was attended by a number of Their Excellencies the ministers.

Four MoUs were signed by Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Singapore Business Federation and a number of specialized companies in consultancy, training, agriculture and construction sector from Qatar and Singapore.

Four memorandums of understanding (MoU) were signed by Qatar Chamber, the Singapore Business Federation and a number of specialised companies in consultancy, training, agriculture and construction sector from Qatar and Singapore. The MoUs will help in expanding trade and economic relations between the two countries, developing mechanisms and procedures for establishing joint investment projects.

They were signed yesterday in the presence of Minister of Economy and Commerce H E Sheikh Ahmed bin Jassim Al Thani, and Singapore's Minister of International Trade and Industry, S Eswaran, on the sidelines of the Qatari-Singaporean economic forum held by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce in cooperation with the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of the Republic of Singapore.

The first MoU, signed between the Qatar Chamber and the Singapore Business Federation,

aims to enhance trade and investment cooperation between the State of Qatar and the Republic of Singapore by providing and sharing information on the two economies, supporting trade delegations and enhancing investment partnership opportunities between the two sides.

The MoU was signed by Chairman of the Qatar Chamber H E Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani and Singapore Business Federation (SBF) Chairman Teo Siong Seng. Under the second MoU, signed between Al Khaleejia Business Management Co of the Talib Group of Companies and Educare international consultancy company, they will discuss ways to enhance bilateral cooperation to provide advisory and training services to teachers and specialists in the educational sector in Qatar.

The two sides will seek to organise workshops, seminars and conferences to enhance knowledge sharing, provide scientific publications, implement joint professional development projects and developing leadership skills, as well as exchange experiences and programs in areas of mutual interest and establish institutions in the educational sectors.

The third MoU, signed between AL Adekhar Agriculture Company of the Taleb Group of Companies and the Cutech Solutions and Services Group, aims to enhance cooperation to evaluate the opportunities for investment partnership in the organic poultry sector and to establish a project in this field.

The fourth MoU was signed between Qatar Primary Material Company (QMPC), Al Wattan International Trading and Contracting Co of Taleb Group of Companies and Engro Ltd, aims to establish a joint venture for the export and supply of raw materials and cement.

The Qatari-Singaporean economic forum is an important initiative in the economic, investment and trade cooperation between the two countries. During the forum, the ministry discussed the advantages of investing in Qatar and how the private sector of Singapore can benefit from the incentives provided by Qatar to foreign investors, in addition to discussing mechanisms for long-term cooperation between Qatari and Singaporean companies to capitalize on the successes of Singapore's economic experience. Singapore is the 7th largest trading partner of Qatar, with the State of Qatar exports to Singapore amounting to about \$3bn in 2016, while the value of imports from Singapore reaching more than \$350m in 2016.

Earlier, Emir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani attended a dinner banquet hosted by Singapore President Halimah Yacob, in honor of H H the Emir and the accompanying delegation.

H H the Emir expressed his thanks to the President of Singapore for supporting and consolidating the distinguished relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

H H the Emir stressed on the importance of the visit which witnessed the signing of more cooperation agreements between the two countries to promote and develop these relations. He pointed out in this regard that the Qatari-Singaporean economic forum currently being held in Singapore will provide more investment opportunities that serve the

common interests.

In his remarks, H H the Emir praised the spirit of friendship and understanding that prevailed in the talks yesterday with the President and the Prime Minister, which dealt with many issues of common concern and means of boosting close cooperation between the two countries in various fields, especially in economy and investment. He noted that this growing cooperation is a matter of satisfaction.

The reception was attended by a number of Their Excellencies Singaporean ministers, senior officials and businessmen. From Qatar's side, it was attended by Qatari businessmen participating in the Qatar-Singapore economic forum. In the speech, the President of Singapore welcomed H H the Emir and expressed her delight at H H the Emir's visit which is the first state visit to Singapore since she assumed presidency.

The President highlighted many shared factors between Singapore and Qatar starting with the developmental path and ending with the regional vital role both countries play, which shows that the two countries' success does not lie in their size.

The President also praised the historic friendly relations between both countries since the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 1984, which was strengthened by forming the High-Level Joint Committee and the role of H H the Emir to strengthen this partnership.

The President referred to the level of joint coordination between both countries in international arenas, based on Qatar and Singapore's active, responsible and constructive role in the international community.

The President discussed the features of Qatar and Singapore's economy as business friendly economies and strongly encourage free trade, referring to the free trade agreement between Singapore and GCC countries, signed in Doha in 2008.

The mutual agreement that concluded between both countries in the field of investment will provide many opportunities to the investment and trade sectors, as well as to the Singapore Business Council previously held in Doha which will deepen the trade and economy relations between both countries. On Qatar's hosting of the 2022 World Cup, the President said she was looking forward to this sporting event in Doha, saying that it will be a historic event and will be held for the first time in the Middle East. The President expressed her confidence that Qatar's hosting of the World Cup would be a resounding success.

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