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17 April 2024

s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

Official Information Act 1982 request – All briefings, memos, and other key documents in relation to the travel in April 2012 to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

I refer to your official information act request (OIA), received by Education New Zealand (ENZ) on 27 February 2024 (transferred by the Ministry of Education) seeking information as below:

- 1. All briefings, memos and other key documents not already publicly available in relation to the travel in April 2012 to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia by the then Minister of Tertiary Education Steven Joyce. Specifically, I am seeking any briefing package or set of documents provided to the minister for his travel and any reports on the expectations and/or outcomes of the minister's travel. (Relevant press release: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/joyce-visit-oman-qatar-saudi-arabia>)*
- 2. Specifically, I am seeking the text of the speech given 'at the largest education fair in the region' by Steven Joyce during his 2012 visit.*

On 22 March 2024, the timeframe for responding to your request was extended due to the consultations needed to be undertaken to make a decision on your request, under section 15A(1)(b) to 17 April 2024.

Please find attached material relating to your request.

No	Category	Subject
1	Briefing	Visit by Hon Steven Joyce Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14-19 April 2012
2	Report	Key elements and main outcomes of Hon Steve Joyce's five day visit to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.
3	Speech	Closing remarks to the International Exhibition & Conference on Higher Education

Some information has been withheld under the following sections of the OIA.

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- Section 6(a) - to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand
- Section 6(b)(i) - to avoid prejudicing the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government
- Section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of individuals
- Section 9(2)(b)(ii) – to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) – to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments
- Section 9(2)(j) – to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

Information about how to make a complaint is available at <https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/> or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests, where possible. Please contact us if you have any questions about this.

Yours sincerely



Di Solomon
General Manager
Government Relations



**Visit by Hon Steven Joyce
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills
and Employment**

to


Oman, Qatar & Saudi Arabia

*including the International Exhibition and Conference
on Higher Education*

14 – 19 April 2012

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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Map of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa



Overview of the Visit

Four principal themes underpin your visit to Oman, Qatar and Kuwait over the period 10-14 March:

- Signing the Memorandum of Cooperation with Oman and advancing the Memorandum of Cooperation with Qatar.
- Attending the International Exhibition and Conference in Higher Education in Riyadh Saudi Arabia, and delivering the closing remarks at this conference.
- Strengthening New Zealand's education ties with the Gulf, through promotion of New Zealand's high quality education system and by supporting education sector representatives, both institutions attending the Exhibition in Saudi and others present in-country during your visit.
- Creating, building upon and strengthening bilateral political ties between New Zealand Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia respectively, through engagement with key political players in each country.

Background

The GCC

Together, the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC, account for nearly a quarter of all global crude oil exports and a sizeable portion of all natural gas exports. The UAE and Qatar, in particular, have also successfully diversified their economies into other areas. Qatar will host the 2022 FIFA World Cup. In preparation, they are set to spend more than US\$60 billion on transport infrastructure, stadiums, hotels and cultural centres.

2 With a combined and fast growing GDP of around US\$1 trillion, the Gulf states are extremely wealthy and they are increasingly taking a global view on their investments.

3 Education in every Gulf State is undergoing significant change. Strategic plans, bold new projects, international assistance and capability-building characterise the education sectors across the GCC. There is genuine openness about systems' weaknesses and the need for change and an increasing awareness of the conservative forces diminishing the progress of reform.

4 Higher Education is a strong focus across the GCC. Most GCC States did not have universities until the late 20th Century. There is now increasing emphasis on improving university performance, the quality of teaching, increase local capacity as well as improve quality research outputs. Almost all Gulf States have commenced well-funded scholarship schemes for students which are increasingly focusing on post-graduate and doctoral studies programmes and less emphasis on undergraduate studies. There are also reports and conferences about qualifications frameworks and quality assurance mechanisms, with discussions taking place about the establishment of GCC wide quality assurance agency.

5 The Gulf States are aiming to decrease their reliance on oil and associated products and have begun approaches to diversify their labour workforce which are focused on building the internal capacity and capability of their indigenous populations and reducing reliance on expatriate workforce. A number of GCC states have initiated specific targets to increase the percentage of domestic workers and decrease the reliance on expatriates. The technical, vocational and training area is one sector which is focused on up-skilling the indigenous population. Consequently there is an increasing emphasis on building new polytechnics, reforming existing institutions, developing staff capacity and improving the quality of programmes. In addition, most GCC States are encouraging life-long learning by providing access to quality adult education programmes.

6 This presents a tremendous opportunity for New Zealand, with our world renowned education system, to develop and enhance strategic partnerships in the region.

7 Your visit to the Gulf comes at a time when New Zealand is devoting considerable time and resource to exploring opportunities for enhancing our political, economic and trade relations with the region. New Zealand is about to develop a NZ Inc. GCC strategy to inform our engagement with the GCC. As part of that strategy we will be canvassing a range of issues, including trade, investment, education, labour, employment, tourism and food security, amongst others. You might want to highlight this during your various meetings and seek interlocutors' views on how New Zealand could best lift its profile in the region.

8 New Zealand concluded negotiations for a FTA with the GCC States in 2009, but the agreement has not yet entered into force [REDACTED]

6a

██████████ Demand for New Zealand products is solid throughout the GCC, but to maintain our competitive advantage, the GCC-NZ FTA remains central to our economic ambitions. You may wish to highlight the importance we continue to attach to concluding the FTA and that we are working to resolve outstanding issues. It is worth noting also that New Zealand's bilateral trade with the GCC reached approx. NZ\$5 billion for the year to December 2011, further emphasising the importance of this region to our economic ambitions.

Oman

9 Education is the vanguard of the overall bilateral relationship with Oman. In 2011 there were 231 Omani students studying in New Zealand and a number of New Zealand education companies operating in Oman.

10 The education relationship was established in 2003 when then Education Minister Trevor Mallard visited the GCC with the Secretary of Education and a delegation of commercial education providers. During that visit New Zealand was asked to assist Oman develop a strategic plan for Higher/Tertiary Education.

11 In 2006 Oman's Minister of Higher Education, Dr Rawya Al-Busaidi, visited New Zealand to sign an agreement with the New Zealand Tertiary Education Consortium Ltd, establishing the provision of four degree programmes and quality assurance for the Oman Colleges of Applied Sciences Project.

12 The Oman Ministry of Manpower announced at the end of 2011 that it wishes to send a number of scholarship students to New Zealand. The details of this scheme are still being finalised within the Omani system, but this could be a significant opportunity for New Zealand to

13 Your visit will be the first visit to Oman by a New Zealand Education Minister since 2005, and will enable the signing of a long finalised Memorandum of Cooperation in Higher Education (MoC). This visit will also set the scene for the Oman Education Minister H.E Dr. Madeeha Bint Ahmed bin Nassir Al Shibaniyah's visit to New Zealand in May.

Qatar

14 New Zealand enjoys solid and increasing relations with Qatar. Minister McCully's visit to Qatar in January this year was the first by a New Zealand Foreign Minister since Hon Warren Cooper visited in May 1984 (the then-Trade Minister Hon Jim Sutton attended the Doha round of WTO talks there in 2001). This was followed by the visit of the Hon Phil Heatley in early March, en-route to the IEF in Kuwait. Consequently, as the first opportunity in 28 years to engage with Qatar's senior leadership, New Zealand is now firmly on Qatar's trade and economic radar. The real-estate arm of the Qatar Investment Authority visited New Zealand in late February scoping potential investment opportunities in

Auckland and Christchurch. And we are expecting further visits by the Qatar Science and Technology Park and National Food Security Programme in May.

15 Your visit will be the first by a New Zealand Education Minister to Qatar. It was hoped to include the signing of a MoC in Education between the two countries, but this has now been deferred due to delays within the Qatari government and a need for the Ministry of Justice to give final sign-off.

16 Qatar has one of the fastest growing economies on the planet - with a higher than 17% rate of GDP growth last year and Qataris enjoy the highest standard of living in the world. As such, considerable economic opportunities for New Zealand exist. Currently, our trade is heavily imbalanced in Qatar's favour – it was our smallest export market in the GCC with just under \$25 million worth of exports (dominated by meat and dairy products) in the year ended June 2011, whereas Qatari imports into New Zealand exceeded \$800 million over the same period – mostly petroleum-based products. This makes Qatar our 22nd most important bilateral trading partner.

17 Both the New Zealand private and public sector providers have enjoyed initial success in engaging with the Qatari services sector. Education and healthcare are at the forefront of this engagement. Qatar will host the FIFA World Cup 2022. This has resulted in a property and infrastructure boom, and created opportunities for New Zealand providers with expertise from Rugby World Cup 2011.

18 New Zealand has had a long involvement in Qatar through work carried by [REDACTED] ^{9(2)(b)ii} On 3 November 2011 HE Minister of Education and Higher Education, Saad bin Ibrahim al-Mahmoud met with a delegation from New Zealand to introduce his thinking on a Memorandum of Cooperation between the State of Qatar and New Zealand, as well as to discuss the key next steps associated with the professional licencing of teachers and school leaders in the State of Qatar.

19 Since that meeting the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC), the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and [REDACTED] ^{9(2)(b)ii} [REDACTED] have worked collaboratively to prepare a proposal. Agreement has also been sought and gained from each of the organisations to work collaboratively on the project, with [REDACTED] ^{(2)(b)ii} taking the lead contractual responsibility.

20 Cognition, with assistance and expertise from the Teachers Council and NZQA, is currently working to secure a contract to provide a teacher licencing and validation of qualifications framework in Qatar. The signing of the MoC will greatly assist Cognition's efforts in this regard.

Saudi Arabia

21 Saudi Arabia is New Zealand's largest partner in the region, but has not received an Education-focussed Ministerial visit since 2003 (although the Secretary for Education visited in April 2010). There has been a large increase in Saudi student numbers coming to New Zealand during that period and, with 5,674 students in 2011, Saudi Arabia is now New Zealand's 5th largest market for international students. Conservative estimates indicate the Saudi market to be worth NZ\$ 300 million dollars in revenue per annum through fees and other costs and expenditure while these students are living and studying in New Zealand (we note here that the Saudi Consulate and Cultural Office in Auckland suggest that the true figure could be closer to NZ\$1 billion in value to the New Zealand economy).

22 The Government to Government relationship is a prerequisite for establishing and maintaining inbound students from Saudi Arabia as well as creating opportunities for New Zealand consultancy firms that may wish to gain access to contracts within the Saudi Education sector.

23 The Saudi Minister for Higher Education, HE Dr Khalid Al-Angari, visited New Zealand in May 2010 to sign a bilateral MoC. The MoC outlines key areas for engagement over 5 years between the two countries and elevates the progression of the education relationship to a formal government to government level of commitment. This event signalled a new phase of normalisation in the education relationship, and also saw an immediate increase in Saudi students coming to New Zealand.

24 In August 2009 Saudi Ministry of Higher Education confirmed that the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme (KASP) to New Zealand (and Australia and the UK) is to be suspended. The Ministry of Higher Education had concerns over the ability of education institutions in those countries to absorb high numbers of Saudi students and the large number of students who have yet to progress to university study from English language programmes. We have recently had encouraging indications from the Saudi side that this suspension is about to be lifted.

25 Separate from the KASP, there are a significant number of separate scholarship students funded through the Ministry of Higher Education from other Government Departments, as well as students on a more general Ministry of Higher Education Scholarship scheme.

26 In 2009 PINZ signed a Memorandum of Understanding the Technical Vocational and Training Corporation (TVTC), allowing them to manage the first and second cohorts of Saudi Arabia's technical and vocational scholarship students in New Zealand. In addition, PINZ is actively pursuing contracts with TVTC for the establishment of a private Training Institute, as well as specific work in female technical education.

27 New Zealand is becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination for Saudi families who come to visit children and relatives studying there. The ninety day visa free period granted to GCC nationals is of significant value in this regard. Many come back impressed by the country and its people. Many are businessmen who subsequently investigate investment opportunities in New Zealand. Saudi students studying in New Zealand will return to Saudi Arabia and enter government service and the private sector and will it is hoped be a significant long term asset to New Zealand's interests in the country.

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April 2012

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Programme

Proposed itinerary

(As at 9 April 2012)

**Visit to Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar,
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
13 -19 April 2012**

Official Delegation for the Sultanate of Oman

Hon Steven Joyce, Minister of Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment
His Excellency, Mr Rodney Harris, Ambassador
His Excellency, Dr Hamed Al Riyami, New Zealand Honorary Consul, Muscat Sultanate of Oman
Mrs Jill Tatersall, Director, Education New Zealand
Mr Steve Jones, New Zealand Trade Commissioner, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Dubai
Mr Tony Davies, Education Counsellor, Education New Zealand, Riyadh

Note-taking and Observers

Mr Simon Beattie, Private Secretary, Minister's Office
Mr Daniel Tasker, Senior Adviser, Middle East Liaison, Education New Zealand, Wellington

Friday 13 April	
21.10	Depart Sydney on Emirates Air EK0413 Business Class Flight Time: 14h 30m
Saturday 14 April	
05.40	Arrive at Dubai International Airport
06.55	Depart Dubai, on Emirates Air EK6482 , Business Class Flight Time 1h 00m
07.55	Arrive at Muscat International Airport
08.30	Arrive at Muscat Intercontinental Hotel
10.15	Depart Muscat Intercontinental Hotel
11.00	Arrive at Ministry of Higher Education
11.00	Meeting with H.E Dr Rawiyah bin Saud al Busaidiyah, Minister of Higher Education Signing Memorandum of Cooperation in Higher Education and lunch
12.30	Depart Ministry of Higher Education
13.00	Arrive at Ministry of Education Meet H.E Dr. Madeeha Bint Ahmed bin Nassir Al Shibaniyah, Minister of Education
13.45	Depart Ministry of Ministry of Education
14.15	Official Lunch, hosted by H.E Dr Rawiyah bin Saud al Busaidiyah, Minister of Higher Education at the Grand Hyatt Hotel

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

15.45	Lunch concluded and depart Grand Hyatt Hotel for the Royal Opera House
16.00	Tour of the Royal Opera House
17.00	Depart Royal Opera House for Intercontinental Hotel
19.30	Dinner at the Crown Plaza organised by NZTE for invited NZ companies (Maven, Cognition, FlickEx, Airways International, ██████████, ASPEQ, ACG, UniServices, and PINZ +their key Oman officials to meet Minister)
21.30	Dinner or function concluded
Sunday 15 April	
08.00	Depart Intercontinental Hotel
08.15	Meeting with H.E Sayyid Badr bin Hamed Al-Busaidi, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
08.45	Depart Ministry of Foreign Affairs
09.15	Meeting Meeting H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Abdullah Al Bakri, Minister of Manpower (Technical and Vocational Education)
10.15	Depart Ministry of Manpower
11.00	Meeting with H.E Dr Faud bin Ja'afar bin Mohammed al Sajwani, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth (link with potential training, research and scholarships)
11.45	Depart Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth
12.30	Visit to Sultan Qaboos University, Meeting with Deputy Vice Chancellor (?)
13.30	Lunch with Chair of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Omani Businessmen (venue Muscat Intercontinental Hotel)
15.00	Lunch concluded
17.30	Depart Muscat Intercontinental Hotel for Muscat International Airport
19.35	Depart Muscat International Airport on Oman Air, WY661 Total Flight 1h 30m. Note one hour time difference

Official Delegation for the State of Qatar

Hon Steven Joyce, Minister of Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment
 His Excellency, Mr Rodney Harris, Ambassador
 Mrs Jill Tatersall, Director, Education New Zealand
 Mr Steve Jones, New Zealand Trade Commissioner, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Dubai
 Mr Tony Davies, Education Counsellor, Education New Zealand, Riyadh

Note-taking and Observers

Mr Simon Beattie, Private Secretary, Minister's Office
 Mr Daniel Tasker, Senior Adviser, Middle East Liaison, Education New Zealand, Wellington

Sunday 15 April	
20.05	Arrive at Doha International Airport
21.00	Arrive at Grand Hyatt Hotel
Monday 16 April	

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

08.30	9.00 Programme of visits could include (programme not yet confirmed by Qatar): Meetings with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Saad bin Abraham al-Mahmud, Minister of Education/Higher Education • H.E. Yusif Husayn al-Kamal, Minister of Finance and Economy Visit to the Science and Technology Park – Qatar Research Foundation
12.30	Lunch with [REDACTED] at the Grand Hyatt Hotel (organised by NZTE) <small>9(2)(b)ii</small>
14.30	Depart Grand Hyatt Hotel for Doha International Airport
16.30	Depart Doha International Airport on Saudi Air, SV541 Total Flight time 1h 30m

Official Delegation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Hon Steven Joyce, Minister of Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment
His Excellency, Mr Rodney Harris, Ambassador
Mrs Jill Tattersall, Director, Education New Zealand
Mr Steve Jones, New Zealand Trade Commissioner, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Dubai
Mr Tony Davies, Education Counsellor, Education New Zealand, Riyadh

Note-taking and Observers

Mr Simon Beattie, Private Secretary, Minister's Office
Mr Daniel Tasker, Senior Adviser, Middle East Liaison, Education New Zealand, Wellington

Monday 16 April	
18.00	Arrive at King Khalid International Airport
18.45	Depart King Khalid International Airport for New Zealand Embassy
20.00	Attend Alumni Function + New Zealand Community night
22.30	Depart New Zealand Embassy for Ritz Carlton Hotel
Tuesday 17 April	
08.00	Depart Ritz Carlton Hotel
09.00	Opening of the International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education
10.30	Walk around Exhibition Site and meet NZ Exhibitors
11.45	Dr Ali bin Nasser Al-Ghafs, Governor of Technical Vocational Training Corporation (Technical and Vocational Education) To be confirmed
13.30	Prince Faisal bin Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Saud, Minister of Education To be confirmed
19.30	Dinner with NZ-Saudi network, and other business interests at NZ Embassy Residence

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

Wednesday 18 April	
8.30 – 14.00	Depart Hotel. Meeting (to be confirmed) to be arranged with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E Dr Khalid bin Mohammed Al Angari, Minister of Higher Education & Science • H.E. Adel Mohammed Fakeih, Minister of Labour
12.00	Meeting Prince Waleed
14.00	Return to Riyadh International Exhibition and Conference Centre for last session of the IEHCE Conference
15.45	Deliver Closing Remarks address on World Class Teaching Universities
16.00	Open Forum
16.30	Closing ceremony
17.30	Media Interviews (television and print media) at the Riyadh Exhibition and Conference Centre (organised by NZTE)
18.45	Depart for Ritz Carlton Hotel
20.00	Informal Dinner at Ritz Carlton with Delegation
Thursday 19 April	
04.20	Depart King Khalid International Airport on Emirates Air on EK816 Duration 1h. 45m (Note one hour time difference).
07.05	Arrive in Dubai International Airport
10.10	Depart Dubai International Airport on Emirates Air, EK0406 Duration (includes a stop in Sydney) 18h 35m
Friday 20 April	
12.45	Arrive at Auckland International Airport

Meeting Briefs Part I: Oman



Sultan Qaboos Mosque



New Oman Parliament, designed by Moller Architects, New Zealand

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Her Excellency

Dr Rawiyah bin Saud al Busaidiyah
Minister of Higher Education

Background

Dr Rawiyah bin Saud al Busaidiyah has visited New Zealand twice, once in 2004 and again in 2006, and has been a strong friend to New Zealand in the education space.

In more recent times, the education relationship with Oman has stagnated somewhat, mainly due to the delayed signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation in Higher Education with Oman. The key purpose of this call is to sign this Memorandum.

Dr Rawiyah has initiated major projects for the reform and quality improvement of Education in Oman, including a Strategic Plan for all of Education in the Sultanate for the period 2006-2020, as well as a project to convert five of Oman's government Colleges of Education to institutions specializing in a range of programs selected to reflect the growing diversification of Oman's economy. She is also active in the GCC region where she is leading a project to develop common standards for the professions, as well as a regional Quality Assurance network.

International Education in the Sultanate

All of Oman's private **Higher Educational Institutes** are required to have academic partnerships with reputable international universities. Normally the international partner provides course material and quality assurance. As an independent **Higher Educational Institute** Sultan Qaboos University engages in

partnerships with a range of prestigious universities around the world, mainly for faculty and student exchange and for joint ventures in research.

Although some international universities offer degrees through local **Higher Educational Institutes**, to date, the only international university approved to operate 'independently' in the Sultanate is the Arab Open University which is affiliated with the British Open University.

At present, the emphasis of the Government of the Sultanate is on capacity building of its own **Higher Educational Institutes** in-country. Oman's **Higher Educational Institutes**; in particular, colleges such as the International Maritime College of Oman and the International College of Management and Engineering (formerly the Fire Safety Engineering College), attract students from the Gulf region; and, as Oman's reputation in Higher Education spreads, we anticipate that students will be attracted from farther afield.

The Sultanate is cognizant of the need to send Omani students abroad to take specialties not available in-country and also to keep abreast of international trends and standards. Accordingly, a number of scholarships are offered for students to study at recognised universities abroad, mainly in the UK, the USA and Australia, but covering a spectrum forty-four different countries around the world.

All of Sultanate's Higher Educational Institutes have good computer laboratory and multimedia facilities including internet access for academic research. Most have some electronic classrooms. The MoHE is actively encouraging e-learning as an important instructional strategy. In establishing the Colleges of Applied Sciences, the MoHE built e-learning into the curriculum plans. All faculty will be educated in the philosophy and use of e-learning technologies. Distance Education will be a core feature of the new Arab Open University branch opening soon in Muscat.

Objectives

- To reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to strengthening education relations with Oman by signing a Memorandum of Cooperation in Higher Education.
- To reinforce New Zealand's interest in the development of the new University

Key Points

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

- We are very pleased at the level of engagement in education between New Zealand and Qatar. We expect to see relationship strengthened by the signing of the Education MoC.
- New Zealand values its relationship with Oman and the wider membership of the GCC very highly. Hope to expand relations given our shared interests in regional and international security matters.
- New Zealand is keen to increase the scale and breadth of the education relationship with the State of Qatar, both in higher and compulsory education, and technical vocational areas. We welcome the upcoming visit of the Oman Minister of Education, and look forward to hosting more visits from the Oman in the future.
- NZ completed FTA negotiations with the GCC in October 2009, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a
- New Zealand is strongly committed to deepening the relationship with Oman and more broadly with states of the GCC. Completing the NZ-GCC FTA would be an important step forward.

*New Zealand Embassy Riyadh/ Education New Zealand
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
March 2012*



H.E. Dr Rawiyah bint Saud al Busaidiyah
Minister of Higher Education

Her Excellency Dr **Rawya Saud Al Busaidi** is the first Omani woman to be appointed to ministerial portfolio. Dr. Rawya has been Oman's Minister of Higher Education since 8 March 2004. She is the president of the council of Sultan Qaboos University and Deputy Chair of the Council of Higher Education. Among the other key posts currently held by Her Excellency are Deputy Chair of Oman's new Science Research Council, and Chair of the Board of the College of Law.

She has initiated major projects for the reform and quality improvement of Education in Oman, including a Strategic Plan for all of Education in the Sultanate for the period 2006-2020, as well as a project to convert five of Oman's government Colleges of Education to institutions specializing in a range of programs selected to reflect the growing diversification of Oman's economy. She is also active in the GCC region where she is leading a project to develop common standards for the professions, as well as a regional Quality Assurance network.

Qualifications

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1988 | D.Phil. Educational Studies (Science Education) University of Oxford, U.K. |
| 1979 | M.Ed. (Science Education) King's College, University of London, U.K. |
| 1978 | Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Studies in Education, School of Education, Bristol University, U.K. |
| 1977 | Diploma in Audio Visual Aids Technology, International Labour Organisation (U.N), Turin, Italy |
| 1975 | B.Sc. (Chemistry & Biology) College of Science, Baghdad University. |

Posts

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

March 2004	Minister of Higher Education Deputy Chair Council of Higher Education
August 2004	Chair, Sultan Qaboos University Council
Jun 2005	Deputy Chair, Council of Scientific Research
October 2010	Chair, Board of Directors , Royal Opera House Muscat
2001- 2004	Undersecretary, Ministry of Higher Education Deputy Chair, Accreditation Board Chair, National Committee for the Equivalence of Academic Qualifications
2000-2001	Director-General for Private Universities & Colleges, Ministry of Higher Education.
1994-2000	Director-General for Colleges and Higher Institutes, Ministry of Higher Education.
1992-1994	Adviser for Educational Affairs, Office of the Minister, Ministry of Education.
1988-1992	Director of Coordination and Follow-up of Academic Affairs, Office of the Vice Chancellor and Rapporteur of the Academic Council Sultan Qaboos University.
1984-1988	Assistant Lecturer, Sultan Qaboos University.
1979-1983	Director of Educational Research, Ministry of Education & Youth Affairs.
1977-1979	National Counterpart to the UNESCO Expert on Science Education, Ministry of Education & Youth Affairs. Acting Head of Laboratory, Force Base Hospital, Ministry of Defence.



H.E Dr. Madeeha Bint Ahmed bin Nassir Al Shibaniyah
Minister of Education

Background

In September 2011, then Minister of Education Hon Anne Tolley invited her Omani counterpart H.E. Dr Madeeha to visit New Zealand in 2012 to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation in Education. This invitation was accepted, and current Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata has re-confirmed New Zealand's desire to host this visit in early May.

Objectives

- To reconfirm New Zealand's pleasure to be able to host Dr Madeeha during her upcoming visit in May.
- To reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to strengthening education relations with Oman.
- To reinforce the strength of Mathematics and Sciences in New Zealand and the depth of experience that some Universities and companies have in this area.
- To reinforce the expertise of Careers New Zealand as a leader in innovation in careers planning and encourage the visit of Omani officials to visit New Zealand to share experiences.
- Reinforce the value of the Royal Society of New Zealand in encourage interest in Science

Key Points

- New Zealand values its education relationship with Oman and the wider membership of the GCC very highly, and hope to expand these relations.
- We are very pleased at the level of engagement in education between New Zealand and Qatar. We expect to see relationship strengthened by the signing of an Education MoC

*New Zealand Embassy Riyadh/ Education New Zealand
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
March 2012*

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**H.E.DR Madeeha bint Ahmed bin Nassir al Shibaniyah
Minister of Education**

Personal Data

Date of Birth: 05/03/1964

Education

Bachelor of Arts: Saint Louis University, MO, Special Education

Master of Arts: Saint Louis University, MO, Education

Doctor of Philosophy: University of California, Teaching and Learning
Emphasis

Professional Experience

Minister of Education

Permanent Delegate of Oman at UNESCO

Secretary General of the Oman National Commission for Education Culture and
Science

Committees and Councils

Member of Council of Civil Service

Member of Higher Education Council

Member of the Research Council

Professional Affiliation

American Educational Research Association

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HE Sayyid Badr Hamed Al Busaidi

Omani Secretary-General of Foreign Affairs

Background

Sayyid Badr Al Busaidi (**Note:** Sayyid Badr is a formal honorific title in Oman) has played an active role, since the early 1990s, in the implementation of Oman's foreign policy, carrying out the chief of staff function for the Minister and directing Ministry operations on his behalf. He has represented Oman in regional and international meetings, including the GCC, the Arab League, in the multilateral phase of the Middle East Peace Process, at the United Nations, and in many other multilateral and bilateral forums.

He played an active role in the process which led to the establishment of the Middle East Desalination Center (MEDRC) in Oman and he has, since the Center's establishment in 1996, served as Oman's representative and the Chairman of its Executive Council.

Sayyid Badr led a delegation to New Zealand in 2008, the last senior-level engagement between our two countries before your visit.

Key Points

- I am honoured to be able to convey the personal thanks of the Government of New Zealand, and in particular the people of Christchurch, for the generous US\$1 million donation from His Majesty the Sultan in the wake of the Christchurch earthquake. This gesture from our friends in Oman was deeply appreciated.
- I note you have requested to visit Antarctica during the next season on the ice. Our Foreign Ministry supports that request, and a decision will soon be taken on upcoming visits to the ice. A visit to Christchurch

(where Antarctica NZ is based) en route to Antarctica would provide an opportunity to view the earthquake recovery effort first hand.

- We understand that the intention would be for a senior student from Sultan Qaboos University to accompany the Secretary-General. Auckland University has established links with Sultan Qaboos and we would hope that such a visit could also provide an opportunity to strengthen those links.
- New Zealand is seeking a term as a non-permanent member on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2015/16 period. Elections are in October 2014. New Zealand is standing in a contested race for one of two available seats for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). The other two candidates are Spain and Turkey.
- The campaign is progressing well, with significant commitments of support secured so far. Commitments represent a broad range of UN members. We would welcome a commitment of support from the Government of Oman.
- It is worth recalling that it is nearly 20 years since we last served on the UNSC in 1993-1994. At that time we were pleased to work with Oman as fellow non-permanent members in 1994.
- We recognise that environmental issues are of specific concern for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and note that Sayyid Badr plays a lead role in the advancement water re-use technology in the Middle East. We would be pleased to host the Secretary General in Wellington for discussions on environmental management, agriculture and fisheries, tourism and other potential areas for increased cooperation between our two countries.
- Education is a cornerstone of our bilateral relationship and we look forward to the visit to New Zealand next month by the Oman Minister of Education, HE Dr Madessha bint Ahmed bin Nassir al Shibaniyah to sign a memorandum of cooperation on education.

*Middle East and Africa Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
April 2012*

H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Abdullah Al Bakri

Minister of Manpower (Technical and Vocational Education)

Background

New Zealand has had peripheral involvement with the Ministry of Manpower in regards to the colleges of technology, and vocational education. There has been some interest in improving the quality of the programmes in the colleges of technology as well as encouraging students with Higher Diplomas (equivalent of a two year diploma in New Zealand) to come to New Zealand and complete a bachelor degree. The Ministry of Manpower has also indicated an interest in encouraging some tutors in the Colleges to come to New Zealand for post-graduate studies up to PhD level.

More recently, the Ministry of Manpower announced the creation of a scholarship scheme focused on vocational training, targeting mainly high school graduates, in areas such as air traffic control, fishing, deckhands and boat maintenance, electrical appliance maintenance etc.

Key points

- NZ has significant strengths in technical and vocational education, which is managed through Institutes as well as on the job training.
- NZ has much in common with Oman in terms of fishing and coast line
- NZ could provide expertise to manage a combination of in-country training and support for vocational training as well as more extensive training in New Zealand.



H.E. Dr Faud bin Ja'afar bin Mohammed al Sajwani

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth

Al Sajwani represents a new breed of experienced younger Minister who has been appointed on merit as opposed to proximity the Royal Omani family. He was previously the Deputy Chairman of the Omani Central Bank and enjoys a reputation for being effective. He was appointed to his Ministerial role in March 2011. His appointment coincided with the combining of what were formerly two separate ministerial portfolios (agriculture and fisheries).

Key points

- I am honoured to be able to convey the personal thanks of the Government of New Zealand, and in particular the people of Christchurch, for the generous US\$1 million donation from His Majesty the Sultan in the wake of the Christchurch earthquake. This gesture from our friends in Oman was deeply appreciated.
- Congratulations on the positive steps that Oman has taken so far to develop its fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
- As a maritime nation with a strong record in both fisheries management and aquaculture, New Zealand is keen to Oman in achieving its fisheries goals.
- New Zealand has over many years developed excellent training programmes in both the agricultural and fishery sectors which could be of mutual benefit for both countries to collaborate on.
- New Zealand also has some excellent post-graduate qualifications in the Agricultural and bio-technology areas which could be appropriate for graduates interested in pursuing their studies at higher level.
- How is development of Oman's Agriculture sector progressing? Are there areas where NZ firms or government can assist?

Background

Oman can currently meet less than 50% of demand for both red and white meat from local production. It relies on importation from countries such as New Zealand to make up the shortfall, but red meat remains very expensive, and development of the livestock industry is of particular concern. Transforming Oman into a productive agricultural producer (within the limitations imposed by the climate) is a priority for Oman. Oman also imports almost all other agricultural produce due to unfavourable weather conditions and a shortage of available water. Oman is seeking international partners to assist them to transition away from traditional, inefficient agricultural production methods and sectors towards modern, efficient, profitable techniques and sectors. The Oman Ministry of Agriculture has recently made inquiries about agricultural and fisheries cooperation (through their Embassy in Tokyo).

Oman's aquaculture sector has been "drastically underdeveloped", accounting as it does for less than one percent of the Omani fishing industry's output. Oman is keenly aware of the opportunities in this sector, but also of the need to set strong guidelines and to develop aquaculture in a coherent way that takes account also of environmental sustainability and tourism industry concerns. Oman is seeking consultants to advise on best-practice in the sector.

Independent NZ fisheries consultant Bruce Shallard led a consortium, which included NIWA and Deloitte in securing and completing an Oman government contract to survey Oman's fish stocks in 2007.

Dr Phil Heath of NIWA addressed the Agriculture Investment Conference held in Muscat 10-11 December 2011. He presented on the subject of Shellfish and Abalone Farming.

Oman is currently looking at commissioning an Omani 30m research vessel and would like to hear from New Zealand firms interested in participating in the tender board process for construction, provision of professional skills and skills development. There was a need for the training of crew and research scientists for the vessel. Areas of particular interest are biology, genetics, ecology and oceanography as well as training of crews and other maritime technical training. The minister last year approved 20 scholarships at Masters and PhD level for MoAFW employees, three or four of which were in Aquaculture. He has indicated to Post that he is hopeful some of the students could study in NZ.

Oman Ministry of Higher Education oversees the scholarships for post-graduate students. It is possible for some of these to be awarded to employees of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth. Similarly, the Ministry of Manpower is investigating the feasibility of establishing short scholarships for training in the boat and fisheries area. New Zealand has the capability to provide such

assistance in both the Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics as well as Industry Training Organisations. Two New Zealand companies ([REDACTED] [REDACTED]) have expressed an interest in being involved.

9(2)(b)ii

Minister Al Sajwani has previously expressed interest in conducting a visit to New Zealand. [REDACTED]

9(2)(g)i

*New Zealand Embassy Riyadh,
April 2012*

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Meeting Briefs Part II: Qatar



Doha Skyline



Foyer of the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha

Meeting Brief: The Crown Prince HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani

General Points

NZ enjoys solid relations with Qatar and there are strong indications that Qatar wishes to step-up engagement in areas such as investment, food security/safety, education and science and technology. Ministers McCully and Heatley have visited Qatar in the past two months. Qatar has also proposed an Air Services Agreement. Qatar has indicated support for NZ's candidacy for the 2015/16 UNSC and engaged positively in efforts to conclude the FTA. Qatar is our **22nd most important trading partner**. The value of bilateral trade in June 2011 was **NZD 872 million** with the balance of trade being vastly in Qatar's favour due to NZ imports of Qatari oil and petroleum products. NZ exports of **NZ\$ 24,874,000** was dominated by meat and dairy products. NZ imported **NZ\$ 848,431,000** million worth of mostly petroleum-based products. Both the NZ private & public sector have enjoyed initial success in engaging with the Qatari services sector. Education and healthcare are at the forefront of this engagement. Qatar will host the **Football World Cup 2022**. This has resulted in a property and infrastructure boom.

Objectives

- Reinforce New Zealand's commitment to relations with Qatar and the GCC, including through the **NZ GCC FTA**.
- Explore opportunities to refocus and deepen bilateral relations, including in areas such as **trade, investment, healthcare, education, food security, science and air services**.
- Engage Qatar on **2022 Football World Cup planning**.
- Discuss **education linkages** with Qatar
- Offer **thanks** for Qatari indications of support for **UNSC candidature** and seek views on NZ engagement with Arab League nations to seek support for the candidature.

Key points

- NZ values its relationship with Qatar and the wider membership of the GCC very highly. Hope to expand relations given our shared interests in regional and international security matters.
- The RWC was a great success but also a learning curve for a small country such as New Zealand. There may be experiences we could share as you begin preparations for hosting the Football World Cup 2022?
- I understand you chair the Supreme Education Council. I am very pleased at the level of engagement in education between New Zealand and Qatar. I am pleased to have been able to sign the MoC on Education today with my colleague the Minister of Education.
- NZ is keen to partner with Qatar to help Qatar meet its food security needs. We would like to work with Qatar to strengthen cooperation on food security and we look forward to supporting the visit of the Qatar National Food Security Programme to New Zealand in early May.
- NZ is in the process of developing its hydrocarbon sector. My colleague the **Minister of Energy Hon Phil Heatley** recently visited Qatar and raised with your government the prospect of advice and investment to assist us in developing this sector of our economy.
- Understand that Qatar has proposed an ASA with New Zealand. We would be interested in discussing this further. Can I suggest our respective officials meet to progress this as a matter
- Greatly appreciate Qatar's indicated support for NZ's candidacy for the 2015/16 UNSC. New Zealand sees similarities with Qatar in its approach to foreign policy. Like Qatar, NZ seeks to pursue a foreign policy which is principled, pragmatic and independent. NZ policies and engagement on the MEPP, Sinai, Lebanon, Iran, Sudan and Afghanistan all aim to support regional peace and security. New Zealand is very keen to engage more closely with Arab countries and the Arab League in the UN and other international forums.

- [REDACTED]

6a

- We were very pleased to conclude the NZ GCC FTA at the end of 2009. [REDACTED] We see that this FTA would have significant positive impacts for New Zealand and the GCC. Would welcome your advice on how we should look to progress the current impasse.

6a; 9(2)(i)

Background Information (if necessary)

*The Heir Apparent is the 4th son of the Emir (and Sheikha Moza). He chairs the Supreme Education Council and the Board of Directors, Qatar Investment Authority. He is Vice Chairman of the Supreme Committee for Economic Affairs and Investment. He heads the Supreme Oversight Committee for implementation of **Qatar's National Vision 2030**. He has a strong interest in sport and heads the Qatar 2022 Board - for the 2022 FIFA World Cup - and Qatar's National Olympic Committee. He is a Sandhurst Graduate and is Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.*

*New Zealand Embassy
Riyadh
April 2012*



**H.E. Saad bin Abraham al-Mahmud,
Minister of Education/Higher Education**

Background

The Minister's background is ICT administration and he served as Director of Administrative and Financial Affairs at Amiri Diwan (the Qatari Royal Court) for many years. A Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC) between the Qatar and New Zealand Ministers of Education is at an advanced state of negotiation. ██████████ ██████████ Consultants are active in Qatar and are at the centre of a public-private partnership (PPP) involving ██████████, the NZ Teacher's Council and NZQA.

9(2)(b)ii

General Points

NZ enjoys solid relations with Qatar and there are strong indications that Qatar wishes to step-up engagement in areas such as investment, food security/safety, education and science and technology. Ministers McCully and Heatley have visited Qatar in the past two months. Qatar has also proposed an Air Services Agreement. Qatar has indicated support for NZ's candidacy for the 2015/16 UNSC and engaged positively in efforts to conclude the FTA. Qatar is our **22nd most important trading partner**. The value of bilateral trade in June 2011 was **NZD 872 million** with the balance of trade being vastly in Qatar's favour due to NZ imports of Qatari oil and petroleum products. NZ exports of **NZ\$ 24,874,000** was dominated by meat and dairy products. NZ imported **NZ\$ 848,431,000** million worth of mostly petroleum-based products. Both the NZ private & public sector have enjoyed initial success in engaging with the Qatari services sector. Education and healthcare are at the forefront of this engagement. Qatar's ambitious 5-year National Development Strategy places education at the core of efforts to develop Qatar's economy away from almost complete reliance on the hydrocarbons sector.

Objectives

- Identify opportunities for NZ to assist with Qatar's education reforms; and for bilateral co-operation between both the public and private education sector.

- Note ^{9(2)(b)ii} ██████████ Consultants are active in Qatar and are at the centre of a PPP involving NZ Teachers Council and NZQA to work on teacher registration and licensing.
- Note ^{9(2)(b)ii} ██████████ interest in securing service contracts also with the Supreme Education Council

Key points

- Very pleased at the level of engagement in education between New Zealand and Qatar. Expect to see relationship strengthened by the eventual signing of a MoC on Education.
- Pleased to hear that ^{9(2)(b)ii} ██████████ and NZQA and NZTC had the opportunity recently to present to you on teacher registration and licensing in 2011. How is this work progressing?
- How is the implementation of the education component of Qatar's National Development Strategy progressing? Are there further areas in education with which NZ may be able to assist?
- New Zealand welcomes students from across the world, including about 8000 from the Gulf. NZ would welcome Qatar students at all levels.
- A letter of invitation from my colleague, the Minister of Education was sent to you last year. NZ would welcome a visit by you to New Zealand.
- NZ is interested in increasing academic and research linkages between NZ Universities and the Qatar University & the Qatar foundation. We would welcome advice on how to develop these linkages.

Background Information

QATAR EDUCATION REFORM ACHIEVEMENTS 2002 – 2010

Schooling

- SEC – Supreme Education Council Establishment
- Education for the New Era Reform (2002)
- Independent Schools
- Curriculum Standards
- National Professional Standards
- Professional Licences
- Choice – Public and Private, Voucher System
- QCEA - Qatar Comprehensive Education Assessment

Higher Education

- Qatar University Reform (2003)
- Qatar Foundation , Education City

- Attraction of world renown Universities
- Internationally recognized degrees and diplomas

COGNITION – CONTRIBUTION TO QATAR

- **2004-2010**
 - Advice, coaching, mentoring for more than 70 Independent Schools
- **2006-2007**
 - ECE Integration
 - Master Training for Curriculum Standards
 - Schools Evaluation Office training and mentoring
- **2008-2009**
 - Senior Secondary Assessment
 - Additional School Accomplishments
 - Board of Trustees Training
 - ICT Evaluation
 - Internal Assessment
- **2008-2012**
 - Registration and Licencing
- **2009-2010**
 - National Professional Standards
 - Professional Development English teachers
 - Curriculum and Pedagogy for Ministry Staff
 - Leadership Training for new Principals

COGNITION THE OPPORTUNITIES

Professional Licensing Office

- Validation and Verification
- Moderation of Portfolios and Attestation
- International Networking and Capacity Building
- Impact Evaluation
- Initial Teacher Training and Ongoing Professional Learning

National Development Strategy

- Validation and Verification
- Moderation of Portfolios and Attestation
- International Networking and Capacity Building
- Impact Evaluation
- Initial Teacher Training and Ongoing Professional Learning

Partnership

- [REDACTED] 9(2)(b)ii
- NZ Government – Education NZ, New Zealand Teachers Council, New Zealand Qualifications Authority

*New Zealand Embassy Riyadh/Education New Zealand
March 2012*



Biographical Information:

**H.E. Saad bin Abraham al-Mahmud,
Minister of Education/Higher Education**

Education

Professional Experience and Responsibilities

His Excellency Mr. Saad bin Ibrahim Al Mahmoud is the Minister of Education and Higher Education and Secretary General of the Supreme Education Council (SEC) in Qatar.

In April of 2009, the Deputy Emir and Heir Apparent HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani appointed Saad bin Ibrahim Al Mahmoud as the new Minister of Education and Higher Education. H.E. Saad bin Ibrahim Al Mahmoud is committed to achieving the goals of education reform in Qatar and wants to realize the potential of all Qatari children and ensure that they and Qatar itself are globally competitive

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H.E. Yusif Husayn al-Kamal

Minister of Finance and Economy

General Points

NZ enjoys solid relations with Qatar and there are strong indications that Qatar wishes to step-up engagement in areas such as investment, food security/safety, education and science and technology. Ministers McCully and Heatley have visited Qatar in the past two months. Qatar has also proposed an Air Services Agreement. Qatar has indicated support for NZ's candidacy for the 2015/16 UNSC and engaged positively in efforts to conclude the FTA. Qatar is our **22nd most important trading partner**. The value of bilateral trade in June 2011 was is **NZD 872 million** with the balance of trade being vastly in Qatar's favour due to NZ imports of Qatari oil and petroleum products. NZ exports of **NZ\$ 24,874,000** was dominated by meat and dairy products. NZ imported **NZ\$ 848,431,000** million worth of mostly petroleum-based products. Both the NZ private & public sector have enjoyed initial success in engaging with the Qatari services sector. Education and healthcare are at the forefront of this engagement. Qatar will host the **Football World Cup 2022**. This has resulted in a property and infrastructure boom.

Objectives

- Reinforce New Zealand's commitment to relations with Qatar and the GCC, including through the **NZ GCC FTA**.
- Explore opportunities to refocus and deepen bilateral relations, including in areas such as **trade, investment, healthcare, education, food security, science and air services**.
- Note New Zealand interest in working with Qatar in the hydrocarbon sector.

- [REDACTED]

6a

Key points

- We have watched the rapid progress made by Qatar in recent years. Your economic development and investment policies are impressive.
- NZ values its relationship with Qatar and the wider membership of the GCC very highly. New Zealand wants to step-up relations with Qatar. We are very pleased to have recently welcomed a visit of the Qatari Diar to New Zealand and we will shortly host visits from the Qatar National Food Security Programme and the Science and Technology Park.
- I am very pleased at the level of engagement in education between New Zealand and Qatar. I am pleased to have been able to sign the MoC on Education today with my colleague the Minister of Education.
- NZ is keen to partner with Qatar to help Qatar meet its food security needs.
- NZ is in the process of developing its hydrocarbon sector. My colleague the Minister of Energy Hon Phil Heatley recently visited Qatar and raised with your government the prospect of advice and investment to assist us in developing this sector of our economy.
- Understand that Qatar has proposed an ASA with New Zealand. We would be interested in discussing this further. Can I suggest our respective officials meet to progress this as a matter
- We were very pleased to conclude the NZ GCC FTA at the end of 2009.
[REDACTED] 6a,9(2)(j)
[REDACTED] We see that this FTA would have significant positive impacts for New Zealand and the GCC. Would welcome your advice on how we should look to progress the current impasse.
- Interested also to hear your views on how we can deepen our bilateral trade and economic ties.
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a

*New Zealand Embassy
Riyadh
March 2012*

Biographical Information:

H.E. Yusif Husayn al-Kamal, Minister of Finance and Economy



Date of Birth: 1948

Marital Status: Married with six children

Educational Qualifications:

- May 1973: B.A. in Business Administration, Cairo University

Other Courses:

- Several Public Finance courses with IMF, Washington. D.C. USA
- Several courses in Public Finance, Principals of Mathematics & Economy with different American Universities

Languages known: Fluent in English and Arabic

Present Positions:

- 29th January 2002 till present: Minister of Finance
- 1998: Director Public Works Authority
- 3rd January 2005 till present: Vice Chairman, Qatar Diar Real Estate Invest Co.
- 19th October 2004 till present: Vice Chairman, Supreme Council for Communication & Information Technology
- 20th May 2003 till present: Secretary-General, Government of Qatar Supreme Council for Economic Affairs & Investment
- 30th December 1999 till present: Chairman Qatar Steel Company
- 1998 till present: Vice Chairman, Planning Council
- 20th January 1998 till present: Chairman, Qatar National Bank
- 20th January 1998 till present: Governor, Islamic Development Bank
- 20th January 1998 till present, Governor, International Monetary Fund & World Bank
- 20th November 1996 till present: Vice Chairman, Qatar Petroleum
- 2nd June 1996 till present: Chairman, Ras Laffan LNG Co. Ltd.
- 1998 till present: Director, Qatar Foundation

Hobbies:

- Sailing and Fishing

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Meeting Briefs Part III: Saudi Arabia



Kingdom Tower, Riyadh



Masmak Fort, Riyadh

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Dr Ali bin Nasser Al-Ghafis

**Governor of Technical Vocational Training Corporation
(Technical and Vocational Education)**

Background

The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) is one of the three main government agencies with responsibility for education and training in Saudi Arabia. Unlike the Ministries of; Education (primary and secondary schools) and Higher Education (universities), TVTC (under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) has responsibility for technical education and training. It does this through administration of Colleges of Technology (also known as Technical Colleges, equivalent to NZ ITPs), Technical Secondary Institutes (parallel school system to mainstream education) and Vocational Training Centres (equivalent to 'second chance' institutes for those who have not progressed through the school system, aimed at 15-45 yr olds).

Nine percent of (Saudi) GDP is invested in Education and TVTC has responsibility for 72 Vocational Training Institutes (VTI's), 46 Colleges of Technology (CoT) and over 900 PTE's. Growth in trainees enrolled in TVTC institutions over 2003 – 2008 was over 120%. TVTC also (now) has responsibility for women's technical training, an area that was previously (prior to 2003) administered outside the auspices of TVTC. This is a key area of particular interest to PINZ.

TVTC and PINZ signed a Memorandum of Understanding in March 2009. The signing of the MoU provides a formal platform for PINZ to operate one or more institutions in Saudi Arabia. Importantly, a key component (Clause 8) of the MoU facilitates the path for PINZ to establish and operate a technical institution for TVTC. It will be based on a New Zealand model.

Objectives

- We wish to reaffirm the strong commitment that we have to the New Zealand – Saudi Arabia Education Relationship.

Key points

- Possible to have an update on the TVTC – PINZ Memorandum of Understanding signed in March 2009?
- Possible to have an update on the PINZ-TVTC scholarship programme 2 + 2 (The 2 + 2 scholarship programme will involve TVTC staff tutors and instructors with Associate degrees but who generally have no formal teaching training studying at Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) in New Zealand?)
- Has there been any movement on bringing New Zealand experts to Saudi Arabia to assist TVTC with quality assurance training?
- Possibilities for English Language programme support in Saudi Arabia as well as continuation of English Language programmes already in place with PINZ.

*New Zealand Embassy
Riyadh
March 2012*

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



Biographical Information:

Dr Ali bin Nasser Al-Ghafis

**Governor of Technical Vocational Training Corporation
(Technical and Vocational Education)**

Dr.Ali Nasser Al- Ghafis

Governor: General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational Training.

Academic Background

- Ph.D. in Public Policy-Research & Analysis “Science and Technology Policy” Pittsburgh University, Pennsylvania, U.S.A, 1991.
- M.Sc. in Public Administration- Pittsburgh University, Pennsylvania, U.S.A, 1987.
- B.Sc. in Public Administration-King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 1985.
- High Diploma in Administration Science-Pittsburgh University, Pennsylvania.1989.
- High Diploma in Applied policy Analysis- Pittsburgh University, Pennsylvania.1989.
- High Diploma in Information Services Administration, Pittsburgh University, Pennsylvania.1987

Experience:

- Governor- General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational from 2001 - 2012
- Vice-Governor for Research &Development. (GOTEVOT) 2001
- Responsibilities included Research, Curricula, Libraries, Development of Manpower Organizational Structures, Work Procedures & Approaches in The Organization.
- Director General for Technical Education 1991-1997
- Asst. Professor, General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational Training. Responsibilities Include: Lecturer in the College of Technology , Director of Research & Curricula Directorate in the Organization. 1990 - 1991
- Scholarship Student for M.Sc. & P.hD degrees. 1985-1990
- Instructor & Deputy 1984-198
- Instructor & Deputy Director of the Secondary Commercial Institute 1984-1985
- Instructor in the Agricultural Technical Institute 1980-1984

Memberships:

- Member of the Board of Directors, Institute of Public Administration
- Member of the Board of Directors, Saudi Credit Bank 1996-1998

RESTRICTED

HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

- Member of the Training/Scholarship Committee for Civil Service Employees
- Member of the Preparatory Committee, High Committee for Educational Policy 1998-2000
- Member of the High Committee for Education.
- Member of the Saudi National Committee for Education, Culture & Science from 1997 to 2000.
- Member of the Board of Directors and Head of the Executive Committee of the Human Resources Development Fund(H.R.D.F)
- Participation in the Membership of the Saudi Joint Committees
- Supervising meetings between officials of the General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational
- Training & Businessmen in the Chambers of Commerce, & Industry

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Prince Faisal bin Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Saud

Minister of Education

Objectives

- We wish to reaffirm the strong commitment that we have to the New Zealand – Saudi Arabia Education Relationship.
- We wish discuss ways in which New Zealand and Saudi Arabia can cooperate on a range of issues resulting in a win-win for both countries.

Key points

- New Zealand has a world leading compulsory education system.
- New Zealand has hosted visits from senior officials and staff from the Ministry of Education, most recently at Massey University in March 2011.
- New Zealand has much experience with rural and small schools that might be of interest to Saudi Arabia.

*New Zealand Embassy
Riyadh
March 2012*



Biographical Information:

Prince Faisal bin Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Saud

Minister of Education

His Highness Prince Faisal bin Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Born on: May 13, 1950. His mother, Princess Nov bint Abdulaziz, and his wife Princess is Adilah bint Abdullah bin Abdulaziz (daughter of King Abdullah)

Educational attainment

Master of Industrial Engineering

Study in the field of Values, Technology and Society

Stanford University, California. United States of America.

Bachelor of Business Administration California - United States of America.

Positions within Government

Prince Faisal held several positions including

Deputy Commander, National Guard in the western sector

Assistant Chief of General Intelligence.

Hobbies and Interests

- Founder and Chairman of the Saudi Federation for Equestrian Games and Archery
- Member of the International Equestrian Federation
- Chairman of the seventh group of the International Federation of Europe
- Founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors Foundation (to Jan for Culture)).
- Authored a book on the Art of Photography
- He has great interest in the artefacts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and is interested in encouraging tourism and investment.
- Tennis and skiing.
- Equestrian and racing cars.
- Encouraging the arts,
- The organization of art exhibitions
- Participant in the production of the documentary film (Bihar, sand, and sky) on the Arabian Peninsula



HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal
Chairman of Kingdom Holdings Ltd

Background

Prince Al Waleed, 57, is a member of the Saudi Royal Family and nephew of King Abdullah.^{6a} [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] An entrepreneur and international investor, Al Waleed [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]^{6a}As of February 2012, his net worth is estimated at US\$18.5 billion, according to Forbes, making him the 19th richest person in the world.

General Points

New Zealand and Saudi Arabia share generally warm, long-standing relations, [REDACTED]^{6a}. New Zealand has increased the frequency of high-level Ministerial visits in the past two years (Ministers Groser, Brownlee, McCully and the Governor-General), to develop a broader constituency of support outside of the NZ-GCC FTA. Saudi Arabia is a country that places great store on frequent, personal, high-level contact. Relations have been further strengthened by the opening of the Saudi Consulate General and Cultural Office in Auckland.

Trade relations with Saudi Arabia were valued at NZ\$1.5 billion in the year to December 2011 – the Kingdom is our largest GCC export destination, (NZ\$691 million – a 12.3% increase on 2010) while imports reached NZ\$870 million (up 215% as New Zealand shifted oil purchases away from Iran). Education remains the cornerstone of relations, with estimates of some 7,000 young Saudis studying in New Zealand. Conservatively estimated, this is worth some NZ\$300 million annually to the New Zealand economy.

Objectives

- Offer thanks for the support of the Al-Waleed bin Talal Foundation in the wake of the Christchurch earthquake.
- Reinforce New Zealand's hope that Prince Al-Waleed will be able to visit New Zealand (potentially in early October) and note the strong NZ Government support for the visit.
- Reiterate that New Zealand will be providing a set of possible investment and philanthropic proposals for consideration by Kingdom Holdings and the Al-Waleed bin Talal Foundation.

- [REDACTED]

6a

Key points

- Grateful opportunity to meet with you today. I have heard from the Governor-General how much he valued his meeting with you and Her Highness.
- Appreciate also the opportunity to again convey the thanks of the Government of New Zealand and the people of Christchurch for the generous donation in the wake of the Christchurch earthquake. The rebuilding of the city will be a long term project.
- I am here attending the International Higher Education Conference and Exhibition. There are now over 7,000 young Saudis studying in New Zealand. They are a vital bridge between us and they are great Ambassadors for Saudi Arabia.
- We are working hard also to support women's education in the Kingdom and also want to develop ways to better link Saudi graduates of New Zealand universities with leading employers in the Kingdom.
- We hope that you will be able to visit New Zealand this year, and I understand October has been mooted as a possible timing. You will be assured of a warm welcome by the New Zealand government. We would also encourage consideration of a short visit to one of our Pacific Island neighbours to better understand the enormous challenges facing this region.
- We have been working with your office on providing some possible investment and philanthropic proposals for your consideration. We hope to

have this information to your team shortly. Suspect that some of the headline proposals will relate to Christchurch and also developments in our biggest city, Auckland.

- I am impressed with your funding of Islamic Studies Centres in Western universities. If a New Zealand university was interested in this kind of initiative would you be open to their approach?

- [REDACTED]

*New Zealand Embassy
Riyadh
April 2012*

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



H.E Dr Khalid bin Mohammed Al Angari

Minister of Higher Education & Science

Background

The Minister of Higher Education is accountable to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the prime minister. His main tasks include:

- Presiding over the board of every university
- monitoring government's educational policy in the field of higher education
- supervising universities including approving subjects offered for study; Forward the subjects, that he deems fit, to the concerned university board for study.
- Appointment of university president,
- Approving the assignment of colleges, institutes and supporting deanships, deans from the university's Saudi teaching staff, based upon the nomination of the universities presidents.
- Charging specialists in the ministry or the universities to conduct studies related to higher education affairs, in general, or specifically for certain areas related to a specific sector of the higher education, or a specific university.

There has been a massive expansion in the development of Higher Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia over the last ten years. There are now 21 Government and 18 Private Universities with over 700,000 students enrolled. The focus more recently has been to develop capacity within the Kingdom, but more recently this has shifted to focus on quality. The University of Auckland has been providing training and consultancy support for King Saud University in training staff in managing quality assurance within the University, and has recently undertaken a major contract with Princess Nora University.

Objectives

- We wish to reaffirm the strong commitment that we have to the New Zealand – Saudi Arabia Education Relationship.

- We wish to reaffirm the strong commitment that we have to the New Zealand – Saudi Arabia Education Relationship.
- We wish discuss ways in which New Zealand and Saudi Arabia can cooperate on a range of issues resulting in a win-win for both countries.

Key points

- **Reforms in Tertiary Education in New Zealand with a focus on the changes in quality assurance.** New Zealand has had robust mechanisms in place across the tertiary education sector for the last twenty years. A new approach to quality assurance is being implemented in Universities, Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) and Private Training Establishments. University of Auckland has provided training and mentoring programmes in quality assurance for some Universities in Saudi Arabia.
- **The Register of Quality Assured Qualifications** contains all quality assured qualifications from secondary up to and including doctorates. Saudi Arabia is in the process of establishing their National Qualifications Framework in higher education. There is also discussion about establishing a GCC Qualifications Framework.
- **Degree Recognition.** As of 2011 the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education only recognise 4 ITPs for degree recognition. An application has been made to the Ministry of Higher Education for recognition of degrees a further 5 ITPs.
- **Centres of Research Excellence** have been operating in New Zealand since 2002. Saudi Arabia adopted the same model after visiting New Zealand in 2006. Their Research Centres were being evaluated by Don Smith, from the Royal Society of New Zealand.
- **Student numbers:** In 2011, there were 5,1674 Saudi Students enrolled in New Zealand Institutions. Saudi Arabia is our 5th largest source country for international students.
- **Higher Education Reform in Saudi Arabia:** Saudi Arabia is interested in improving the quality of higher education institutions through capacity building of academic staff. King Saud University has improved its World Academic Ranking from 3000 to being in the top 200.

*New Zealand Embassy
Riyadh
March 2012*



Biographical Information:

H.E Dr Khalid bin Mohammed Al Angari

Minister of Higher Education & Science

Personal Information

Date of birth: 1952

Place of birth: Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Academic qualifications:

Ph. D. June 1981 - University : Florida University, United States of America

Work experiences:

Minister of Higher education from 1991 - 2012.

Minister of Rural and Municipal Affairs beginning 1989 to 1991

Deputy of the Minister of Rural and Municipal Affairs from 1987 - 1989

The Deputy of the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs for Planning and Programs from 1983 to 1987

The Acting Deputy of the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs for planning cities from 1983 to 1987

General Manager of Planning and Programs, Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs, from 1982 to 1983

Assistant professor, College of Arts, King Saud University from 1987 to 1988

Scientific efforts

Published books

A Comparative Factorial Ecology, Riyadh: [AJA Press](#), 1983.

Remote Sensing and its Applications in the Spatial Studies, Riyadh, [Dar Al](#)

[Mareekh](#), 1986. Urbanization in Gulf Arabian Countries, [Kuwait](#), [Geographical](#)

[Kuwaiti Association](#), 1988, Translated. Urban and Rural Profiles in Saudi

Arabia, [Stuttgart](#): GEBRUDER BORNTRAEGER 1989.
Aerial Profiles in Studying the Uses of the Lands and Land Cover: Applied

study, Kuwait, Geographical Kuwaiti Association, 1988.

Duties as Minister includes:

- The Minister of Higher Education presides over the council of each university. He is responsible for monitoring the execution of the educational policy of the country in the field of university education. Also, he monitors the application of the system of the Higher Education and Universities Council and its lists existed. He is responsible for all universities and each university subjects to his supervision
- He refers the issues that should be referred to the University Council to study them

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

- He can ask inserting any issue in the University Council agenda or he can postpone it before the meeting of the Council
- He suggests recruiting the managers of the Universities or releasing them from their positions
- Receiving the annual report of each University its Manager presents concerning its affairs, activities and he raises it to the Higher Education Council
- Giving consent or disagreement concerning nominations presented to him by the University Manager or releasing the Universities Deputies in order to decide it from the Higher Education Council
- He gives his consent to the recruitment of the Colleges and Institutes Deans and Supporting Deans from the Saudi Teaching Staff according to the nomination of the Universities Managers
- Assigning the concerned officers in the Ministry or Universities to conduct some studies related to the Higher Education affairs in general or some issues that are related to one sector of its sectors or one university
- He assigns three experienced officers as members in the University Council for three years
- Coordination with the Universities and the Concerned Bodies in preparing the executive lists to the system of Higher Education and Universities Council
- Supervising execution of the Arabian Magazine and King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives, according to the mentioned tasks and specializations in its regulations.

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International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education (IECHE)

The IECHE is held annually in April at the Riyadh Exhibitions Centre. More than 370 top Universities from 32 countries participate in the event. The Saudi Ministry of Higher Education reported that in 2011 65 out of the top 100 Universities participated in the IECHE. The Exhibition and Conference provides a venue for potential students to meet Universities from around the world, an opportunity for participants to discuss higher education issues and become better acquainted with the latest trends in higher education. Activities include cultural attachés gatherings, training sessions and workshops.

Key note addresses at past conferences have included: Jamil Salini, Education Director from the World Bank, David Skorton, President of Cornell University, Dr Barbara Brittingham, Chair of the Commission on Institutions of New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Jo Ritzen Rector of Maastricht University and former Minister of Education, Cultural and Sciences in the Dutch Government, Golan Mohamed Bhai, Former Secretary General of the Association of African Universities Union.

New Zealand participation

A large number of New Zealanders will be participating in the IECHE from the following institutions:

- Universities New Zealand (Auckland, AUT, Waikato, Massey, Victoria, and Otago)
- Institutes of Technology: (WINTeC, Whitireia, EIT, Otago Polytechnic and CPIT)
- English New Zealand (Auckland English Academy, Cornell Institute of Business & Technology, Dominion English Schools, Dynaspeak English, Edenz Colleges, Language Studies International (LSI), Taupo Language, Worldwide School of English).
- Immigration New Zealand and the Office of the Education Attaché at the New Zealand Embassy

Company Profiles

New Zealand companies working in the region, who you may meet during your visit.

Airways Corporation of New Zealand Ltd

Representative: Sharon Cooke, General Manager, Airways Training

Sharon is an experienced business professional with a strong background in higher education and training. She has a Master of Business Administration degree and is a qualified Chartered Accountant. Business experience includes: strategic planning; product development; customer relationship management; continuous quality improvement; change management; and the effective use of technology to improve business outcomes.

Experience in tertiary education spans two decades with senior management roles as College Manager at the University of Canterbury and prior to that Director, School of Business, at the Christchurch College of Education.

Company Background

- Airways Corporation is an Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) founded in 1987 as a fully-commercial State-owned Enterprise (SOE) of the New Zealand government. In 2010, the company had revenues of \$143 million.

2. Airways' 750 employees deliver air traffic control and engineering training and associated services; provide Air Traffic Management/Communication Navigation Surveillance (ATM/CNS) and Aeronautical Information Management/Aeronautical Information Systems (AIM/AIS) design; airspace and procurement consultancy; and revenue management in over 65 countries. Managing 30 million square kilometres of airspace, Airways is a leader in Performance-Based Navigation (PBN) and Collaborative Flow Management (CFM), and a founding partner in the Asia Pacific Initiative to Reduce Emissions (ASPIRE) programme.

Current Business in GCC

3. Oman, UAE and Saudi Arabia are high priority markets for Airways. Airways are engaged in the provision of training courses for Air Traffic Controllers and Engineers as well as the sale of revenue management systems such as their Flight Yield software to other ANS providers. Airways are actively scoping work in aviation infrastructure consultancy and project management within the GCC.

4. Airways are working with the Saudi Aviation authority on providing training for Saudi air traffic controllers at their New Zealand training facility. Continuous efforts are undertaken to foster the relationship and renew the contract, in addition to gaining interest for training from the other GCC nations.

5. Airways provide engineering training for people interested in working for the Directorate General of Meteorology and Air Navigation and the military in the communications, navigations and surveillance fields of air navigation in Oman.

[REDACTED]

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Academic Colleges Group

Participant: Richard Kensington, ACG Academic Registrar

Richard joined ACG in February 2001 as Manager of Student Data and as the timetabler for ACG Senior College and ACG New Zealand International College. In 2001, Richard was appointed as Academic Registrar overseeing the admissions of international students into all ACG New Zealand schools. Richard is also responsible for the staff that looks after international student services.

Richard plays an active part in ACG student recruitment and undertakes regular visits to countries of interest to ACG. In recent years, he has visited the Middle East and the Gulf States numerous times with three visits to the region already in 2012. ACG's involvement in the New Zealand Tertiary Education Consortium was under his steerage. The purpose for ACG to meet with you during your visit to the Middle East include:

- Cementing and furthering existing education relationships in Oman
- Meeting Officials in Education, Trade and Investment
- Seeking further educational investment opportunities

Company Background

4. ACG was established by Ms Dawn Jones, Sir John Graham and Danny Chan in 1995. The current ACG Board and the Chief Executive, Mr Ian King have created a leading independent provider of educational services in New Zealand and offshore.

5. ACG operates seven schools in New Zealand, one in Jakarta (Indonesia) and two Ho Chi Minh City (Viet Nam). ACG currently has over 1,100 international students enrolled at its New Zealand schools. Danny Chan, Deputy Chairman, is a Mission Delegate on the Prime Minister-led trade mission to Indonesia and Singapore.

Current Relationships in GCC

6. ACG visited Oman in February 2012, and held meetings with education Government Ministries on matters ranging from scholarship students to areas of co-operation on the delivery of English, Preparatory Year Programmes and foundation programs. The initial discussions were initiated by the Oman Ministry of Defence. In 2011, Richard represented AUT University at the Universities Road show to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

7. Visits to Saudi Arabia have seen discussions progress with private Universities in a number of cities and private trainers discussing English and Preparatory Year programs. ACG visited Egypt and Jordan early 2012, to look at establishing into sister school relationships with visits to schools and English and Preparatory Year programs. ACG will be on the University of Auckland stand at the Fair in Riyadh and will meet with a number of potential university partners who have expressed interest in working with New Zealand.

Cognition Education Ltd

Representative: Chris Sullivan, General Manager Knowledge and Growth

Chris is an experienced educator who has worked extensively in New Zealand, England and the Gulf States. Chris has had responsibility for planning, implementing and reviewing diverse schooling improvement and learning projects in New Zealand and offshore. He has presented widely at national and international conferences including the International Congress on School Improvement and Effectiveness.

Company Background

1. Cognition Education Limited was established in New Zealand in 2006. It is an independent education consultancy which provides policy advice, school management and teacher professional development support services to government clients in New Zealand, Qatar and Abu Dhabi. Cognition Education has been working in the Gulf States since 2004 (under its previous name Multiserve).

2. In 2011 the company had revenues of \$35 million, of which \$32 million was from overseas markets. Cognition has approximately 100 staff in Abu Dhabi and three full time employees (FTEs) in Qatar.

Current Business in Qatar

3. Cognition is pivotal to the public private partnership between New Zealand Teachers Council, New Zealand Qualifications Authority and Cognition to assist the Qatar Education Authorities validate teacher experience and qualifications. Cognition is establishing a limited liability company in Qatar and is awaiting approval from the Minister of Education to sign the approval. This will enable Cognition to enter contracts with the Qatar government. A company must be registered within Qatar to enter into a legal contract.

4. Cognition has been instrumental in assisting both the New Zealand and Qatar Ministry of Education in drafting a Memorandum of Understanding which encompasses many potential areas for cooperation and potential opportunities for New Zealand education organisations. An annual implementation plan will be developed to scope projects and ensure all New Zealand education players are aware of opportunities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9(2)(b)ii

Maven International Limited

Company Representative: Lesley Kennedy, Chief Executive

Lesley is Maven's Chief Executive and a shareholder in the business. She has held senior roles in large multinational IT and financial organisations, as well as establishing and operating two of her own businesses in New Zealand. Her particular areas of expertise include business strategy and management, negotiation, organisational transformation and innovation.

Company Representative: Chris Knol, International Business Development Director

Chris is a Managing Consultant, Maven shareholder, and a skilled project manager and development assistance practitioner with experience in over 30 countries including Bahrain, Oman, Asia and the Pacific. Chris has proven project design, planning and implementation skills, having executed well over 100 social development projects at all levels of capacity and capability development

Company Background

6. Maven is a privately held Wellington-based strategy and operations consultancy firm. Maven's primary market is the government sector in New Zealand and they have led and completed over 150 projects across the health, justice, education and transport sectors in particular over the last six years. The company has a full time employee, Chris Knol, based up in the Middle East region for six months to work on the process and finalisation of the 26 project bids that are currently in place. If Maven are successful in winning some of these projects an office will be established in market.

7. Maven has a government focus in New Zealand. Maven has been involved in major government reforms projects in the Health, Education, Justice and Transport sectors. Maven has developed partnerships with these New Zealand government agencies to sell high value services to governments of similar size worldwide, particularly in UAE and Qatar.

8. Maven is currently working on a partnership with Save the Children and Auckland University of Technology in the Pacific working with local communities to develop sustainable economic solutions to their social requirements.

Current Business in Qatar

9. In January 2012 Maven presented a technical bid to the Supreme Education Council in presence of the Qatar Minister of Education. The company is awaiting a final decision which is in the hands of the Qatari Central Tender Board. This potential contract with the Supreme Education Council will be to develop a vocational plan as part of the reorganisation of the structure of the educational system in Qatar.

10. Maven is an NZTE Focus 500 customer account, and has engaged with NZTE's offshore network.



Background Briefings

Country Status Reports

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Background: Oman-New Zealand relations update

Bilateral

- New Zealand's relationship with Oman is warm [REDACTED] with education being the cornerstone of our engagement. There are currently around 231 Omani students studying in New Zealand tertiary institutions and opportunities continue to arise for New Zealand to provide education consultancy services. In May 2006 an agreement was signed between the Omani Ministry of Higher Education and the New Zealand Tertiary Education Consortium Ltd, establishing the provision of four degree programmes and quality assurance for the Oman Colleges of Applied Sciences Project.
- Auckland firm, Moller Architects won the design contract in late 2010 for the new Oman parliament buildings, currently under construction in Muscat,
- Oman currently ranks as New Zealand's ninth largest export market in the Middle East. In the year to December 2011, New Zealand exports to Oman were worth NZ\$64.1 million, composed principally of dairy products and meat. Imports from Oman in the same period were totaled NZ\$188.7 million, comprising mainly oil and petroleum products with smaller amounts of nitrogen fertiliser.
- Last year Oman released its eighth Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), the fourth link in a longer term vision for Oman's economic future ("Oman 2020"). Special attention is given in the plan to upgrading the tourism, agriculture and fisheries sectors. This may provide opportunities for New Zealand expertise in these areas. The prevalent attitude in Oman welcomes foreign investment, particularly the technical expertise it brings and the training it can provide to Omani nationals.
- The Oman Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth has expressed an interest in visiting New Zealand to learn more about capabilities in marine aquaculture. A response from NZ MAF is awaited in respect of this visit.
- Recently MFAT received, and subsequently endorsed, a request for the Omani Secretary-General of Foreign Affairs, HE Sayyid Badr Hamed Al Busaidi to visit Antarctica during the next season. He would take with him a senior student in marine sciences from Sultan Qaboos University. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

we recognise that environmental issues are of specific concern for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and note that Sayyid Badr plays a lead role in the advancement water re-use technology in the Middle East.

9(2)(g)

- Of particular note, Oman contributed \$1 million towards the Christchurch earthquake relief fund last year.

Oman Key facts

Official Name - Sultanate of Oman

Land Area - 309,500 km²

Population – 3.608 million (2011 United Nations estimate)

Capital City - Muscat

Religion - Islam

Language - Arabic (official) - English, Urdu, Persian, Baluchi and Swahili are also widely used.

Currency - 1 Omani Rial (OMR) = 100 baiza, NZ\$1 = OMR0.304 (as at Jan 2012).

Political

Political system - Monarchy

National government - The Sultan rules by decree, assisted by a Council of Ministers.

National legislature - There is no national legislature - but 84 member Consultative Council *Majlis al-Shura* (Consultative Council) is elected by universal suffrage and an advisory State Council – the *Majlis al-Dawla* - made up of tribal representatives and dignitaries

Head of State/Government - Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said, who assumed power in July 1970. The Sultan is also the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Finance and Foreign Affairs.

Last elections - Consultative Council elections took place on 15 October 2011, with voter turnout of 76%.

Main Political Parties - Political parties are not permitted

Economic

GDP - US\$63.52 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Real GDP growth – 4.4% (2011 EIU estimate)

Exports - US\$44.2 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Imports - US\$21.5 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Current account balance - US\$6.8 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Inflation - 4% (December 2011 EIU estimate)

Gross external debt - US\$9.1 billion (December 2011 EIU estimate)

New Zealand Trade

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HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

NZ Exports (FOB) - NZ\$64.1 million (year ended June 2011)

Main Exports - milk powder (49.8%), lamb (30.9%), beef (5.9%)

NZ Imports (CIF) - NZ\$188.7 million (year ended June 2011)

Main Imports – crude oil (91.2%), nitrogen fertilizer (8%) and biscuits (0.4%). Qatar-New Zealand relations update

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Background: Qatar-New Zealand relations update

Bilateral

- New Zealand's relationship with Qatar is solid and is quickly gaining momentum following visits by Ministers McCully and Heatley in January and March respectively. Minister McCully's visit was the first by a New Zealand Foreign Minister since 1984, and it paid immediate dividends, with three Qatari delegations assembled to visit New Zealand.
- Qatar DIAR, the real estate wing of the Qatar Investment Authority (a sovereign wealth fund with more than US\$60 billion in assets globally), visited in late February and had a range of calls in Auckland, Christchurch and Queenstown. Later this month the Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP) will visit universities and key New Zealand CRIs and science and technology companies. Then in May the National Food Security Programme (QNFSP), headed by a member of the Qatari royal family, will visit New Zealand to begin scoping opportunities for a strategic food security partnership between New Zealand and Qatar.
- New Zealand is also very well-placed to assist Qatar to meet its ambitious education, healthcare and research and development goals under the five-year Qatar National Strategy 2011-2016. The New Zealand Embassy in Riyadh, including the Education Counsellor, has been working with ^{9(2)(b)ii} [REDACTED] consultants and MoE to conclude a MoC on education cooperation. Cognition is leading a PPP with NZ College of Teachers and NZQA to provide consultancy services, principally in teacher registration and licensing and quality assurance.
- NZ firms such as ^{9(2)(b)ii} [REDACTED] have an interest in supplying services and expertise to the Qatar healthcare sector as it seeks to implement its ambitious healthcare goals under the Qatar National Healthcare strategy. The Qatar Minister of Health has requested a MoC with NZ on healthcare to ^{6a: 9(2)(g)i} [REDACTED] and provide a strong base for engagement of the NZ public and private healthcare sectors in Qatar.
- Qatar is hosting the FIFA World Cup 2022. There may be a significant opportunity for NZ to leverage off our excellent reputation earned as hosts of the RWC. In the mid-term, the construction boom as Qatar gears up to meet its massive infrastructure commitments under its successful bid may provide opportunities for NZ firms in construction and infrastructure. There may also be potential to attract investment to NZ including for hydrocarbon exploration and production: the Qatar Investment Authority, Qatar's

sovereign wealth fund, has an estimated US\$85 billion of assets under management.¹

- Bilateral trade reached NZ\$872 million for the year to June 2011 with the balance of trade being greatly in Qatar's favour. New Zealand's exports for the period were valued at NZ\$24.9 million with meat (49%) and dairy (24%) being the leading items. New Zealand imported NZ\$848.4 million with oil and petroleum products accounting for 93.1% of imports from Qatar.

Domestic economic

- A projected 16% economic growth in Qatar in 2011 was spectacular. However, this was attributed largely to several long-term energy projects coming on line. Growth is projected to slow to an average of 5.6% in 2012-2016. Government surpluses are forecast to be US\$53 billion or around 30% of Qatar's US\$176 billion GDP. Qatar avoided recession in 2008-09 and its economy surged ahead in 2010 due to global energy demand and a near doubling of LNG production. Government coffers are expected to stay strongly in surplus for at least the next four years due to hydrocarbon revenues. This is in spite of expected high levels of capital spending on education, health, transport and infrastructure related to the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar (which is set to spend US\$100 billion on projects directly related to the World Cup over ten years). This massive investment will underpin domestic growth.

*Middle East and Africa Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
April 2012*

¹ Sovereign Wealth Fund Estimate (www.swfinstitute.org). The Qatar Investment Authority does not publically report its holdings.

Qatar key facts

Geography/Demographics

Land Area	11,521 km ²
Population	1.759 million (2010 – World Bank estimate)
Capital City	Doha
Religion	Islam (95%)
Language	Arabic (but English widely used)
Currency	Qatari Riyal (QR) = 100 Dirhams
Exchange Rate	US\$1 = QR 3.64 (fixed to the US\$), NZ\$1 = QR2.82 (as at Dec 2011)

Political

Political system	Hereditary emirate
National government	Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister, appointed by the Emir.
National legislature	No elected legislature. The Emir appoints a Consultative Council (<i>Majlis al-Shura</i>) of 35 members, which is empowered to debate legislation and make recommendations to Cabinet.
Head of State	HH Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani, Emir of Qatar, who acceded to the throne on 27 June 1995.
Head of Government	HE Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem bin Jabor Al-Thani (since 3 April 2007), Prime Minister & Foreign Minister of Qatar.

Economic

GDP	US\$ 173.87 billion (2011 EIU estimate)
Real GDP growth	17.2% (2011 EIU estimate)
Exports	US\$107.4 billion (2011 EIU estimate)
Imports	US\$25.3 billion (2011 EIU estimate)
Current account	US\$51.5 billion (2011 EIU estimate)
Inflation	2.1% (2011 actual)
Gross external debt	US\$115.5 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

New Zealand Trade

NZ Exports (FOB)	NZ \$24.87 million (for year ended June 2011)
Main Exports	Beef (NZ\$7.03 million); lamb (NZ\$5.13 million); cheese (NZ\$3.55 million); butter (NZ\$2.55 million)
NZ Imports (CIF)	NZ \$848.43 million (for year ended June 2011)
Main Imports	Crude oil (NZ\$789.97 billion); nitrogen fertilisers (NZ\$59.4 million); polymers (NZ\$6.97 million);

EIU = Economist Intelligence Unit

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Background: Saudi Arabia-New Zealand relations update

New Zealand established formal diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1977, and it has remained consistently our most significant market in economic terms in the Middle East region. Our efforts in the region are typically valued [REDACTED] 9(2)(g)i

[REDACTED] It is worth continuing to register [REDACTED] [REDACTED],^{6a} along with our commitment to the Sinai Peninsula and to capacity building efforts in Afghanistan. These are points we routinely raise, as Gulf States' support for New Zealand's Security Council bid in 2015-16 will be important, and the vote of Saudi Arabia may assist in bringing other GCC States on board.

2 As well as being a major dairy market (two thirds of our exports to the Kingdom last year were milk powder, butter or cheese – with a value approaching half a billion dollars), Saudi has become a significant source market for international students. Educational linkages between the Kingdom and New Zealand have brought the bilateral relationship to new levels. There are now over 5,000 Saudi students studying in New Zealand, with some estimate of Saudi tertiary students in New Zealand institutions placing their value at over NZ\$300 million per year (with the Saudi government suggesting the figure is closer to NZ1billion per annum). New Zealand is also involved assisting the Saudi Government with educational reform including curriculum development, technical vocation and in-country training.

3 Saudi Arabia is a strategic source for petrochemicals for the New Zealand economy: last year the Kingdom was our fifth largest oil supplier, shipping over NZ\$620 million of crude oil to New Zealand in the year ended December 2011 – which represents 8.1% of our total oil supply.

4 New Zealand signed an agreement with Saudi Arabia in January 2001 to encourage trade and technical co-operation. This agreement established a mechanism through a Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), for the governmental and private sectors to meet on a regular basis. The Minister of Trade, Hon Tim Groser, led New Zealand's delegation to the fourth JMC in Riyadh in April 2010.

5 The issue of the New Zealand-Gulf Co-operation Council Free Trade Agreement (NZ-GCC FTA) remains a sticking point in our relations with Saudi Arabia. The FTA, negotiations for which have been completed, remains unratified [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6a

[REDACTED]

6a

7 [REDACTED]^{6a}, Saudi Arabia's rapidly growing population and increasing affluence together with the development of sophisticated retail outlets make it a good prospective market for New Zealand exporters. High oil prices have insulated the Saudi economy from many of the impacts of the global financial crisis. There are increasing opportunities for providers of services and expertise, including the commercialization of public sector as well as private commercial skillsets and intellectual property. Saudi Arabia, along with the Gulf states, has also been identified as a potential source for high-value inbound investment to New Zealand.

8 New Zealand has, since 1999, given Saudis 'visa on arrival' immigration status, making it easy for Saudi visitors to come to this country. Saudi Arabia has not, however, reciprocated - remaining the only GCC country not to grant New Zealanders visa-free access. It should be noted that this is not exceptional: apart from for work, official or religious pilgrimage purposes, Saudi does not offer immigration access at all to the nationals of many states.

9 Regionally and internationally, Saudi Arabia is a powerful and influential player, a founder member of OPEC whose views and positions cannot be ignored. The country is a member of the G20, home to the holiest sites of Islam, an economic powerhouse (albeit with significant structural policy challenges to address) and the world's leading energy supplier. Riyadh houses the GCC Secretariat [REDACTED]

6a

10 During the visit of Minister McCully, it was made apparent that [REDACTED]

6a: 9(2)9g)i

11 There has been a recent surge in high-level visits by New Zealand ministers to Saudi Arabia. The Governor-General, HE Lt Gen Rt Hon Sir Jerry Mateparae, visited Saudi to represent New Zealand at the funeral of the late Crown Prince Sultan in October 2011. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Murray McCully, visited the Kingdom in April 2011 to advance economic ([REDACTED]) and bilateral political relations. The Minister for Economic Development and of Energy and Resources, Hon Gerry Brownlee, visited in February 2011, to attend the International Energy Forum in Riyadh and to launch the New Zealand-Saudi Business Network; and the Minister of Trade, Hon Tim Groser, led a business delegation to the Kingdom in April 2010.

12 Inbound visits to New Zealand from Saudi officials in recent years have focused on educational and agricultural linkages. In May 2010, Saudi Minister of Higher Education Dr Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Anqari visited New Zealand to conclude agreements on scientific and higher education co-operation and in April 2009, Dr Ali bin Nasser Al-Ghafis, Governor of the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation met with Polytechnics International NZ (PINZ) and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen co-operation in technical and vocational training. HE Dr Fahad Balghunaim, Minister of Agriculture visited New Zealand in July 2008 for the 3rd Joint Ministerial Commission meeting.

13 New Zealand is represented in the Kingdom by our Embassy in Riyadh, led by Ambassador Rod Harris. The Saudi mission accredited to New Zealand is their Embassy in Canberra, but they have also established a Consulate-General in Auckland (which has grown to be one of the largest foreign missions hosted here).

*Middle East and Africa Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
April 2012*

Key facts

Geography/Demographics

Official Name - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Land Area - 2,149,690 sq km

Population - 28.2 million (2010 UN estimate - 5.6 million of whom are expats)

Capital City - Riyadh

Religion - Islam (About 85% of the population are Sunni Muslim, and most Saudi sunnis belong to the Wahhabi sect. Shi'a Muslims, located in the Eastern Province, represent 15% of the population.) Religions other than Islam are prohibited.

Language - Arabic

Currency - Saudi Riyal (SAR) = 100 halalas

Exchange Rate - US\$1 = SR3.745 (fixed), NZ\$1 = SAR 2.947 (January 2012)

Political

Political system - absolute monarchy

National government - Council of Ministers, headed by the King - as President of the Council and Prime Minister – plus a Deputy Prime Minister. The Council of Ministers exercises both legislative and executive powers

National legislature - No elected legislature. A Consultative Council (*Majlis as-Shura*) was set up in August 1992 as an advisory body. The King has the right to dissolve it. Members are male; but there are now six female advisors.

Head of State and Government - King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud succeeded to the throne following the death of his brother, King Fahd, in August 2005.

Main political parties - Political parties are not permitted.

Economic

GDP - US\$593.2 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Real GDP growth – 6.7% (2011 EIU estimate)

Exports - US\$350.7 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Imports - US\$106.5 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Current account balance - US\$151.4 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

Inflation – 4.8% (EIU average for Quarters 1-3 of 2011)

Total external debt - US\$101 billion (2011 EIU estimate)

New Zealand Trade

NZ exports - NZ\$691.3 million for year ended December 2011

Main exports - Milk powder (43.4%); butter (18.2%); lamb (14.4%); cheese (5.3%)

NZ imports - NZ\$869.8 million for year ended December 2011

Main imports - Crude oil (91.2%); nitrogen fertiliser (8%); polymers (3.5%).

Middle East Regional Issues

Unrest in the Middle East and Maghreb post-‘Arab Spring’

Key Points

- For the past year political unrest has gripped the Middle East; notably in [REDACTED] 6a
- New Zealand is a minor player in the region but shares with others a desire to see peace and stability. To this end, we continue to contribute humanitarian and development assistance, as well as peacekeeping resources. New Zealand’s trading interests in the Middle East have continued to grow and diversify, despite still being dominated by the exchange largely of food products for oil.
- [REDACTED] 6a
- [REDACTED] 6a

Background

Middle East Peace Process

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 6a

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

6a

Syria

5 Since the outbreak of unrest in March 2011, the Syrian regime has attempted to quell anti-government protests by using lethal force against civilians. The death toll has surpassed 7,000. Despite resounding international outrage of the Assad regime's acts against its citizens, and a UN General Assembly resolution on 16 February condemning the violence, the UN Security Council has been unable to agree on a resolution to impose sanctions or other measures.

6 The Arab League has played a key leadership role in formulating and fronting a political resolution to the crisis. Its Plan calls for an immediate cessation of violence, access for humanitarian aid and political transformation through regime negotiations with the Syrian opposition. This Plan has formed the basis of an unsuccessful observer mission, a UNSC resolution, which was voted down by Russia and China, and the successful UNGA resolution.

7 [REDACTED]

6a

8 New Zealand has acted with likeminded nations in condemning the violence, supporting the Arab League's leadership, cosponsoring the UNGA vote, and speaking out both bilaterally and in multilateral fora, most notably the UN Human Rights Council. In addition, we have enacted sanction-like measures against Syria.

Egypt and Libya

9f

9 Egypt and Libya have both begun along paths towards political transformation following the falls of Mubarak and Qaddafi, respectively. In Egypt, parliamentary elections have been completed peacefully, with the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood as the majority party. A constitution is to be drawn up

before Presidential elections in June. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

10 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a

Iraq

14 An Iraq Government of National Unity was formed in November 2011 after prolonged negotiations between political groups. Nouri Al-Maliki, a Shia, retained his position as Prime Minister in the government, which includes his State of Law coalition, the largely Shia Iraqi National Alliance, the Kurdistan Alliance and the Iraqi National Movement (Iraqiya) led by a former Prime Minister, Ayad Allawi – [REDACTED] 6a

15 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a

17 New Zealand's involvement in the new Iraq has included emergency assistance contributions (\$17.4 million) through the UN and Red Cross, deployment of an NZDF engineering group in 2003/04 to Basra to carry out humanitarian and reconstruction tasks, and stationing of a NZDF Officer at the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) since 2004 as part of our broader regional commitment.

18 Longer term, Iraq offers considerable potential for New Zealand exporters if stability can be maintained. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*Middle East and Africa Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
March 2012*

Released under the Official Information Act 1987

Iran update

Key points

- New Zealand remains deeply concerned by Iran's nuclear programme, with the latest (February 2012) IAEA report compellingly outlining Iran's attempts to carry out nuclear weapons development work.
- Iran must urgently engage with the IAEA – and the international community - to clarify the nature of its activities and prove these are peaceful, as it claims.
- New Zealand has fully implemented the requirements of the June 2010 UN Resolution on Iran (UNSCR 1929), including through a mandatory registration requirement for all New Zealand businesses trading with Iran.
- New Zealand continue to hold grave concerns regarding the systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Iran.

Background information

The most recent International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report, issued in late February 2012, gives little cause for hope that Iran will co-operate with the international community or offer greater transparency around its **nuclear programme**. The latest report, which alleges continuing enrichment of uranium to a grade too high for civil use, and outlines Iran's failure to co-operate with inspectors, follows on from Iran's announcement in January that the Fordow underground facility, near Qom, has begun enrichment – bringing significant increases in centrifuge capacity online.

2 The previous (November 2011) IAEA report sets out in very clear terms weapons-related activities undertaken by Iran from 1997 onwards. These include efforts to procure nuclear-related and dual-use equipment and materials; acquisition of nuclear-weapons-development information and documentation from a clandestine network; and work on the development of an indigenous design of a nuclear weapon. The report noted that while some of the activities identified had civilian - as well as military - applications, others were specific to weapons. As of late February 2012, 19.8kg of highly enriched uranium remains unaccounted for.

3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a

5 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a

6 New Zealand's approach on Iran is in line with the actions of likeminded partners. We have implemented UNSC Resolution 1929, including through requiring mandatory registration for all New Zealand businesses trading with Iran. We have also taken a number of other measures, including: the removal of export credit support; ending government trade promotion in Iran; and limiting high-level contact. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 6a; 9(2)(g)i

Human Rights

7 The international community has grave concerns regarding the continued systematic violation by the government of Iran of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Iran.

8 In November 2011, New Zealand co-sponsored the annual UN Third Committee resolution on Iranian human rights violations, which called on the Government of Iran to release all individuals who have been arbitrarily arrested and detained for exercising their rights to freedom of assembly and peaceful protest on political issues; to eliminate all forms of discrimination and other forms of human rights violations against members of religious minorities; and to end intimidation and persecution of human rights defenders - abolishing public executions and other executions, in particular the death sentence for minors.

Further sanctions

9 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a

Middle East and Africa / International Security and Disarmament /

Afghanistan update

Key points

- New Zealand remains committed in Afghanistan through leading the Bamyán PRT and a development programme focused in Bamyán, as well as our SAS contribution in Kabul (which is finishing in March). New Zealand has not yet made any decisions on commitments to Afghanistan beyond 2014 but we recognise that Afghanistan will need international support after that time.
- Afghanistan's regional neighbours will have a key role in the development and implementation of a lasting and durable solution.

- [REDACTED]

6a

Background Information

Current situation

The overall security situation across Afghanistan remains fragile. [REDACTED]

6a

2 The Taliban-led insurgency remains resilient, [REDACTED]

6a

New Zealand's contributions

3 New Zealand first deployed to Afghanistan in 2001, with the NZSAS. Further deployments of the SAS followed in 2004/5 and 2009. In December 2011 the Prime Minister confirmed that the SAS deployment in Kabul would finish at the end of March 2012, as scheduled.

4 New Zealand took over the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Bamyán in 2003 to enable the United States, which established it, to replicate the

6a

PRT in another region. In leading the Bamyán PRT we currently have committed up to 140 NZDF personnel, 5 NZ Police, a civilian PRT Director, and a civilian Development Adviser. We also maintain a military liaison officer at the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); and five headquarters and liaison staff with ISAF.

5 Our Ambassador in Kabul has been in place since mid-2010, which reflects New Zealand's political commitment to working closely with partners on transition. Also in 2010 we appointed a Wellington-based Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (currently Simon Murdoch).

6 New Zealand's development assistance is focused on Bamyán province. Last year New Zealand allocated \$43 million over three years to transition-related projects in energy and agriculture, two crucial areas for the province's economic development, as well as ongoing support to policing, health and education.

Bamyán transition

7 In July 2011, Afghanistan began the formal process of transition – transferring formal responsibility for security from NATO/ISAF to the Afghan government. Bamyán was one of only two full provinces in the first tranche of transitioning areas and expectations are that Bamyán and our PRT will offer a 'model' of transition for other provinces.

Post-2014 planning

8 [REDACTED]

9 Post-2014 commitments will be a major point of discussion in the lead-up to, and at, the NATO/ISAF Leaders Summit in Chicago in May 2012. New Zealand has not yet made any commitments to Afghanistan beyond 2014, but recognises that Afghanistan will need ongoing international support.

*Middle East and Africa Division/International Security and Disarmament Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
March 2012*

MFO Sinai peacekeeping update

Key points

- As part of our wider contributions to peace efforts in the Middle East, New Zealand will remain strongly committed to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula for the foreseeable future.
- In addition to our 28-person Training and Advisory Team based at North Camp, New Zealand also provides the current MFO Force Commander, Major General Warren Whiting.
- The situation in North Sinai remains volatile following the deaths in an Israeli airstrike of six Egyptian military personnel last August, with ongoing protests by Bedouin near the entrance to North Camp, and with possible weapons proliferation through the region (from Libya following the collapse of the Qaddafi régime). We remain concerned that militants may look to specifically target the MFO if left unchecked.

Background information

The MFO was established in 1982 to ensure compliance with the terms of the 1979 Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel that limits military forces and equipment within the Sinai Peninsula. The MFO has facilitated nearly three decades of peace on a border which was regularly fought over before the Treaty was concluded.

2 To execute its mission, the MFO operates checkpoints and observation posts along the international boundary, and patrols throughout the Sinai. The MFO comprises around 1650 military personnel and 600 civilians from 12 countries: Australia, Canada, Columbia, Czech Republic, Fiji, France, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Uruguay and the US, as well as New Zealand.

3 New Zealand's contribution to the MFO began in 1982 with a helicopter detachment. This was withdrawn in 1986 and replaced with a Training and Advisory Team (TAT). The 16-person team establishes, conducts, maintains and evaluates MFO training courses and provides driver training/license qualifications testing to more than 1,800 personnel annually. Our current commitment is 28 personnel and has recently been extended to February 2014.

4 NZDF Major General Warren Whiting took up the position of MFO Force Commander on 1 March 2010 for two years. Because of his exemplary service in the position, Ministers are considering a request from MFO HQ in Rome to extend his term for a further 12 months, to March 2013. New Zealand gains considerable reputational benefit within the region from this position.

Trade and economic issues

Gulf region air services update

Existing services

Emirates

Dubai-based Emirates Airline now operates to over 100 destinations in Europe, the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

2 Emirates began services to New Zealand in August 2003. Emirates operate over 70 weekly services between Dubai and Australia following a 29% increase in capacity during 2009-10. Emirates now offers 28 services onward connection per week from Australia to New Zealand, with the following daily flights:

- Brisbane to Auckland
- Melbourne to Auckland
- Sydney to Auckland
- Sydney to Christchurch

3 The 'Emirates Group' incorporates Emirates Airline, DNATA (Travel agencies and ground handling services), Emirates Abela (Inflight Catering), Emirates Holidays (Wholesale/Retail Travel) and a number of Dubai-based tourism products including accommodation and touring services.

4 The introduction of Emirates services to New Zealand has proven to be a game-changer in both the trans-Tasman air travel market, and in terms of opening up alternative onwards travel options for many New Zealanders visiting the Gulf and Europe and tourists from Europe and the Gulf coming to New Zealand. It is a model we would seek to emulate with any future air services arrangements with Gulf countries.

Etihad Airways

5 Etihad Airways, based in Abu Dhabi, has been operating since 2003. In 2010 Etihad and Virgin Blue signed a code share agreement that gives Virgin Blue customers four outbound and one inbound flight a week between Auckland and Abu Dhabi.

6 Further to this, in February 2011 Etihad Airways signed an extensive code share agreement with [REDACTED] This code share deal which is

9(2)(b)ii

approaching its first anniversary of operation offers Etihad customers flight options to Auckland, Wellington, Rotorua, Christchurch and Queenstown.

Potential new services

Qatar Airways

7 A premium airline and Qatar's flag carrier, Qatar Airways is undergoing a growth in aircraft fleet size and routing options which parallels its home country's massive economic growth. We see Qatar Airways as having by far the most to offer New Zealand in terms of future air services co-operation in the Gulf Region.

8 Qatar Airways currently fly to Melbourne, Australia, along with Singapore Changi. A Qatar Airways flight from Auckland to Singapore would be of particular benefit. Aside from linking in to a major world air travel hub, such a link would offer competition [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9(2)(g)i

9 Should the issue be raised in Qatar, it is suggested that the matter be referred to the appropriate transport ministry officials in each country to **actively advance the development of an air services agreement** between the two countries.

*Middle East and Africa Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Ministry of Transport
April 2012*

NZTE in the Gulf Cooperation States

Key Points

- New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) manage operations for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states from its Dubai office. The Trade Commissioner, [REDACTED],^{9(2)(a)} oversees a team of six Business Development Managers and reports to the Regional Director for Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) based in Hamburg.
- Approximately 25 New Zealand companies have established a base in the GCC. The majority of these are based in Dubai which remains the preferred point of entry for companies establishing a permanent presence in the region.
- NZTE engages intensively with 55 companies resident in New Zealand or the GCC. Key sectors are Food and Beverage, Information and Communications Technology, Construction, Marine Engineering and Professional Services.
- NZTE has identified the United Arabs Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait as its priority markets within the GCC, based on analysis of New Zealand companies' objectives and market opportunity and accessibility.
- A key focus for NZTE Dubai is to help companies understand and navigate the local business culture and the complex regulatory environment.

Background Information

Food and Beverage

1. New Zealand export statistics to the GCC states are dominated by dairy and red meat products, which are distributed via well-established local channels. NZTE has therefore focussed on promoting high quality value-added products primarily into Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional (HRI) channels, as well as high end retail

2. In recent years NZTE has organised a series of successful inward buyer programmes resulting in some of the UAE's largest HRI operators sourcing New Zealand products for major events or premium restaurant outlets. Successes include:

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

9(2)(b)ii

20. In the past 12 months NZTE has helped ^{9(2)(b)ii} [redacted] companies review their distribution arrangements in the region and ^{9(2)(b)ii} identified alternative distributors where required. This resulted in at least [redacted] company winning significant new orders.

Government Advisory Services

21. New Zealand's high rankings in various international comparative surveys of public sector performance are considered by some GCC states to be relevant to their own reform agendas.

22. [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] a [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] 9(2)(b)ii

23. NZTE and MFAT are considering ways in which New Zealand's public sector intellectual property can be packaged and made available to GCC government clients on a commercial basis – as is already happening to some extent in the education sector.

NZTE Middle East Beachhead Programme

24. NZTE opened a Beachheads Serviced Office in Dubai in 2005 to assist New Zealand companies establish themselves in the UAE. Since then a total of ^{9(2)(b)ii} [redacted] companies have used the facility including the ^{9(2)(b)ii} [redacted] current tenants.

25. [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted].

26. [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted].

27. [redacted]
[redacted].

28. [redacted]
[redacted] 9(2)(b)ii

GCC-NZ trade update

Exports

- New Zealand exports to the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries continued to enjoy a strong rebound in the last calendar year, increasing by more than 20% and now exceeding NZ\$1.5 billion.
- In the year to December 2011, Saudi Arabia remained our largest GCC export market, with a 12.3% increase in export values. Exports to the UAE also experienced strong growth – up 34%, to well over half a billion dollars over the same period. Exports to Kuwait grew by 10%: and now approach NZ\$100 million. Exports to Qatar remain the smallest share of our GCC sales – at less than 2%, but a lot of products are re-exported from Saudi Arabia to Qatar so do not appear in the statistics.
- Bahrain was the only country where our exports fell, [REDACTED]

6a

EXPORTS FROM NZ TO THE GCC COUNTRIES						
Years Ending: June						
Country	NZD			% share GCC	% Change	
	2009	2010	2011	2011	2011/2010	
1 Saudi Arabia	\$474,599,822	\$615,473,612	\$691,296,317	45.5%	12.3%	□
<i>Main exports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Milk powder (43.4%); butter (18.2%); lamb (14.4%); cheese (5.3%)</i>				
2 UAE	\$385,243,402	\$415,617,967	\$557,316,567	36.7%	34.1%	□
<i>Main exports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Milk powder (62.2%); butter (7.9%); cheese (3.4%); beef (3.4%)</i>				
3 Kuwait	\$67,545,235	\$88,237,080	\$97,433,006	6.4%	10.4%	□
<i>Main exports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Milk powder (43.3%); butter (22.1%); lamb (7.2%); cheese (4.8%)</i>				
4 Oman	\$80,195,101	\$48,023,958	\$78,803,957	4.5%	64.1%	□
<i>Main exports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Milk powder (57.9%); lamb (25.7%); beef (6.1%); cheese (3.3%)</i>				
5 Bahrain	\$75,146,892	\$72,331,313	\$68,544,627	5.2%	-5.2%	□
<i>Main exports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Cheese (54.6%); butter (22.6%); beef (5.6%); whey (3.4%)</i>				
6 Qatar	\$23,281,245	\$23,830,151	\$25,595,975	1.7%	7.4%	□
<i>Main exports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Beef (28%); lamb (19.2%); cheese (12.7%); butter (8.9%)</i>				
TOTALS	\$1,106,011,697	\$1,263,514,081	\$1,518,990,449	100%	20.2%	□

Imports

- As has historically been the case, our imports from the GCC countries are focused on oil, petrochemical-related products (such as polymers and plastics) and smaller amounts of fertilisers and metal wire products.
- Qatar remained New Zealand's biggest source of energy imports, with more than 30% of oil shipments to New Zealand from the Gulf (and 12% of New Zealand's overall oil requirements) originating from that Emirate.
- Imports from each of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait more than doubled between the 2009 and 2011 years - as New Zealand sought substitute supplies of oil to meet its energy needs following the reduction in oil imports from Iran.

IMPORTS TO NZ FROM THE GCC COUNTRIES						
Years Ending: June						
Country	NZD			% share GCC	% Change	
	2009	2010	2011	2011	2011/2010	
1 Qatar	\$894,589,796	\$788,132,336	\$1,004,143,832	29.5%	-27.4%	□
<i>Main imports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Crude oil (91.2%); nitrogen fertiliser (8%); polymers (0.7%)</i>				
2 Saudi Arabia	\$237,870,192	\$275,506,193	\$869,849,383	25.6%	215.7%	□
<i>Main imports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Crude oil (71.4%) fertilisers (21%); polymers (3.5%)</i>				
3 UAE	\$441,151,731	\$840,947,677	\$745,648,397	21.9%	-11.3%	□
<i>Main imports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Crude oil (83.6%); glass jars (4.5%); lifting machinery (3.5%)</i>				
4 Kuwait	\$165,750,290	\$218,916,324	\$529,555,983	15.6%	141.9%	□
<i>Main imports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Crude oil (97.4%); nitrogen fertiliser (2.6%); glass fibre (0.1%)</i>				
5 Oman	\$48,310,142	\$198,930,455	\$218,558,163	6.4%	9.9%	□
<i>Main imports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Crude oil (92.8%); nitrogen fertiliser (6.6%); biscuits (0.3%)</i>				
6 Bahrain	\$14,660,467	\$15,854,387	\$35,069,650	1%	121.2%	□
<i>Main imports YE Dec 2011:</i>		<i>Metal cable (64.2%); aluminium wire (19.5%)</i>				
TOTALS	\$1,802,332,668	\$2,338,287,372	\$3,402,825,408	100%	45.5%	□

Middle East and Africa Division
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 April 2012

New Zealand energy imports: oil

Top twenty suppliers

New Zealand Import Statistics					
Commodity: Oil,					
Calendar Year: 2009 - 2011					
Partner Country	New Zealand Dollars			%share	%change
	2009	2010	2011	2011	2011/2010
World	\$ 5,333,343,325	\$ 6,076,324,456	\$ 7,643,406,168	100.00	25.79
1. Singapore	\$ 1,047,571,915	\$ 1,011,311,024	\$ 1,483,711,527	19.41	46.71
2. Russia	\$ 171,793,505	\$ 404,245,852	\$ 1,172,751,903	15.34	190.11
3. Qatar	\$ 874,739,766	\$ 758,789,809	\$ 916,250,448	11.99	20.75
4. UAE	\$ 361,953,594	\$ 756,426,807	\$ 624,467,939	8.17	- 17.45
5. Saudi Arabia	\$ 73,595,406	\$ 109,393,353	\$ 621,347,112	8.13	465.38
6. Kuwait	\$ 147,345,391	\$ 215,739,776	\$ 515,781,228	6.75	139.08
7. Brunei	\$ 484,327,914	\$ 610,462,813	\$ 448,437,411	5.87	- 26.54
8. Malaysia	\$ 203,043,776	\$ 501,944,656	\$ 448,436,769	5.87	- 10.66
9. Korea South	\$ 402,445,208	\$ 430,135,823	\$ 333,841,230	4.37	- 22.39
10. Oman	\$ 47,518,137	\$ 197,805,493	\$ 202,805,262	2.65	2.53
11. Australia	\$ 570,216,467	\$ 436,671,836	\$ 192,712,460	2.52	- 55.87
12. Japan	\$ 416,430,682	\$ 269,954,799	\$ 186,840,418	2.44	- 30.79
13. UK	\$ 2,806,555	\$ 3,106,258	\$ 154,071,168	2.02	4860.02
14. Indonesia	\$ 220,661,468	\$ 106,485,817	\$ 115,122,129	1.51	8.11

RESTRICTED

HON Steven Joyce visit to Oman Qatar and Saudi Arabia, 14 – 19 April 2012

15. Iraq	\$ -	\$ 79,382,574	\$ 104,060,038	1.36	31.09
16. Taiwan	\$ 50,354,141	\$ 113,784,803	\$ 62,341,429	0.82	- 45.21
17. New Zealand	\$ 44,663	\$ 4,027	\$ 19,779,806	0.26	∞
18. Thailand	\$ 12,322,687	\$ 30,714,096	\$ 12,466,010	0.16	- 59.41
19. US	\$ 8,380,486	\$ 9,235,353	\$ 11,199,101	0.15	21.26
20. Germany	\$ 1,971,393	\$ 2,601,307	\$ 4,524,441	0.06	73.93

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New Zealand Economic Update

Key points

- Economic activity in New Zealand has been largely in line with the *Pre-election Update* (published October 2011), albeit slightly weaker. Economic activity over the years ahead is expected to be underpinned by the rebuilding of Christchurch. However, the global economy has weakened since October and remains a significant downside risk for the outlook. Treasury expects the New Zealand economy to grow by 1.9% in the year ending March 2012 and 2.8% in the year to March 2013.

Background information

The New Zealand economy has performed in line with the *Pre-election Update*, albeit slightly weaker. One-off factors such as the Rugby World Cup have contributed to economic growth; and the external sector has benefited from a 37-year high in the terms of trade (although now off its peak). The Rugby World Cup saw over 130,000 international visitors, boosting exports of services over the duration of the tournament; domestic consumption was also boosted by the tournament.

2 The rebuild in Canterbury is not expected to get fully underway until late 2012 – early 2013, and is subject to disruption by further aftershocks, such as the late-December 2011 quakes. The cost of the earthquakes is estimated at \$20 billion in damage to property contents and infrastructure, but total cost estimates rise towards \$30 billion including additional costs from inflation, insurance administration or rebuilding to higher standards than existed before the earthquakes.

3 The household sector had been subdued as households have been consolidating their balance sheets – household saving became positive in the year to March 2011 for the first time since 2000. The labour market is recovering slowly from its 7% peak in unemployment during the global financial crisis. The unemployment rate for the December quarter was 6.3%.

4 The global outlook weakened in the latter part of 2011 but has stabilised recently with a support package for Greece and an easing in financial conditions in Europe. Of concern is the weaker global outlook, and the effect this may have on New Zealand's growth in 2012. The extent of the impact will depend on the severity of recession in Europe, the performance of other trading partners (NZ's greater exposure to strong-growing Asia and Australia has provided some insulation), the level of financial market disruption, and key drivers in the domestic economy, such as the Christchurch rebuild and household consolidation.

5 Treasury's *Economic Outlook* (published February 2012 alongside the *Budget Policy Statement*) forecasts real economic growth of 1.9% for the year ending March 2012 and 2.8% for the year to March 2013.

6 The current account deficit for the year to September was 4.3% of GDP. It is expected to widen as the domestic recovery and the Canterbury rebuild boost imports and export prices ease. Annual inflation in December 2011 was 1.8%. Inflation pressures are forecast to increase again as the rebuild gets underway later in 2012.

7 The New Zealand Government's finances remain sound although much of the "fiscal buffer" has been used up as a result of the recession and Canterbury earthquakes. In the *Budget Policy Statement*, the Government was forecast to return to a small surplus by June 2015.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade/The Treasury
April 2012

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Climate Change

Key points

- The outcomes of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Durban negotiations exceeded expectations and put the world on the path to negotiate a comprehensive agreement covering all Parties (the 'Durban Platform') to enter into force by 2020.
- Key international work in 2012 will be finalising the Kyoto Protocol and Convention tracks and setting up the new ad hoc working group on the Durban Platform so it can form a solid basis for negotiating the new agreement. The Durban Platform is a unique opportunity to think strategically and creatively about what a new agreement might look like to be most effective in the post-2020 world.
- New Zealand looks forward to working constructively with Qatar as host of the 18th Conference of Parties (COP18). New Zealand, in particular Climate Change Negotiations Minister Tim Groser, is ready to help in whatever way we can.
- [If raised] New Zealand is committed to ensuring there is no gap in climate change financing after 2012.
- [If raised] New Zealand is on-track to meet its Kyoto Protocol commitments for the first period, and is currently considering whether to take its post-2012 commitments in second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol or under the Framework Convention. Regardless, New Zealand will continue its mitigations efforts.

Background information

Key outcomes of the UNFCCC Durban Climate Change Negotiations (COP17) included: a "ratifiable" second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (New Zealand has yet to decide whether to take its post-2012 commitments under Kyoto or under transitional arrangements); the "Durban Platform" for negotiating a new agreement; decisions operationalising the Cancun Agreements; and setting up the Green Climate Fund as one part of long-term finance for climate change action.

2 2012 will be a busy year for the UNFCCC negotiations in completing current work. It is important that Qatar as host for COP18 at the end of November does not let that work slip and ensures that set-up of the ad hoc working group on the Durban Platform is completed so negotiations on the new agreement can start in earnest from 2013 onwards.

3 The year ahead will also be a difficult one for the negotiations with Qatar hosting COP18, Saudi Arabia chairing the negotiations' Convention track, and Algeria speaking for the G77 grouping of developing nations. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].^{6a} Only the EU, Norway, Switzerland and the Ukraine have signed up to a second commitment period. New Zealand and Australia are considering their position. Canada, Japan and Russia are taking their mitigation efforts outside Kyoto, as is the United States.

5 [REDACTED]

New Zealand does not support the trade aspect of the issue, and considers that it should focus on the impacts on vulnerable developing countries such as those in the Pacific.

*Environment Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
April 2012*

² Source: United Nations Statistics Division, 2007 data.
³ Source: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, September 2011.

UNSC Campaign (Oman)

New Zealand's Campaign for the UN Security Council 2015-2016

Hon Joyce visit to Oman

Key Points

- New Zealand is seeking a term as a non-permanent member on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2015/16 period. Elections are in October 2014.
- New Zealand is standing in a contested race for one of two available seats for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). The other two candidates are Spain and Turkey.
- The campaign is progressing well, with significant commitments of support secured so far. Commitments represent a broad range of UN members.
- Oman is aware of our UNSC aspirations [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Your visit is a unique opportunity to engage with Oman at the highest levels.

9(2)(g)i

- [REDACTED]

6a

- Key messages to advance New Zealand's campaign with Oman include that:
 - Election to the UNSC is a high priority for my government. It is nearly 20 years since we last served on the UNSC in 1993-1994.
 - At that time we were pleased to work with Oman as fellow non-permanent members in 1994.
 - New Zealand takes a fair and balanced approach to Middle East issues, have a domestic record of acceptance of our Muslim population, and can act as an honest-broker on contentious topics.
 - We have a long, proud history of UN peacekeeping in the Middle East, including in Lebanon and the Truce Supervision Organisation in the Sinai.
 - We will work hard to represent the UN's many small states.

- We will enhance Asia Pacific representation on the Council, and while we work well with NATO through ISAF, we are not in NATO and are not from the European Region.

Background

New Zealand announced its candidature for the UNSC in 2004, and this was reconfirmed by the Prime Minister at the UN General Assembly in 2009. New Zealand's last term was in 1993-1994, and a new term as a non-permanent member is consistent with our international profile.

2 Until April 2011, the election for the WEOG seats was uncontested, New Zealand and Spain were the only declared candidates. A third candidate, Turkey declared in April for the 2015-2016 term. Turkey is fresh from a recent stint on the Council, with their latest term ending in December 2010. At the time of Turkey's decision, the New Zealand Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs commented publicly that the campaign would progress as planned, and that New Zealand was pleased with the commitments of support it had received so far.

3 Middle East issues are key in the UN and securing votes from the Gulf states is important symbolically in terms of New Zealand's broader campaign. We have a good story to tell given our longstanding, balanced and generally well regarded position on Middle East issues.

*United Nations Human Rights and Commonwealth Division
March 2012*

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Annexes

General Travel Information

Saudi Arabia is alcohol-free. In Oman and Qatar, consumption is permitted within 5 Star hotels and certain restaurants.

Attire

For all official calls on this visit the dress code is **standard Western business attire**. For men, this comprises a dark lounge suit and tie; and the equivalent for women (a trouser suit, day dress, or 'dressy' skirt and top for daytime wear). Shorts can be worn within hotels, but are not appropriate for official sight-seeing purposes.

For women, Islamic dress, ie an Abaya will be required, while in Saudi Arabia. In Oman and Qatar, it is also recommended that **modest clothing**, covering the shoulders and arms and with skirts to well below the knee, be worn to all official engagements and a light scarf be carried to cover the head if entering a mosque.

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Delegation listing and contacts

Joining for the Gulf state visits:

HE Mr Rod Harris

Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar



[Redacted]

9(2)(a)



[Redacted]

Saudi Mobile

Mr Tony Davies

Education Counsellor, NZ Embassy Riyadh



[Redacted]

9(2)(a)



[Redacted]

Saudi Mobile

Mr James Munro

Second Secretary, NZ Embassy Riyadh



[Redacted]

9(2)(a)



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Saudi Mobile

Mr Daniel Tasker

Senior Advisor: Middle East



[Redacted]

9(2)(a)



[Redacted]

NZ Mobile

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Timezones

Riyadh ⌚ GMT +2 hours (NZDT minus 9 hours)

Doha, Qatar ⌚ GMT +2 hours (NZDT minus 9hours)

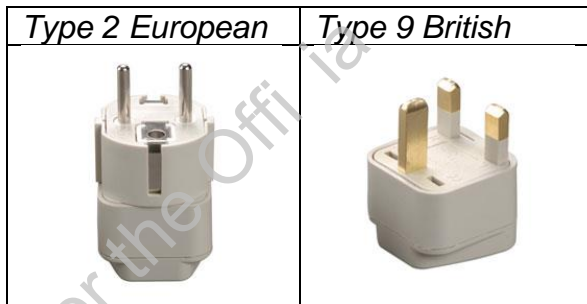
Muscat, Oman ⌚ GMT +3 hours (NZDT minus 10 hours)

Electrical outlets

Riyadh ⚡ European (type 2) / British (type 9) socket, AC 220v 50hz

Doha, Qatar ⚡ European (type 2) / British (type 9) outlet, AC 240v 50hz

Muscat, Oman ⚡ European (type 2) / British (type 9) socket, AC 220v 50hz



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Report

TO Grant McPherson, Chief Executive ENZ

DATE 5 May 2012

AUTHORS Daniel Tasker, Senior Advisor Liaison, Middle East and North Africa
Tony Davies, Education Counsellor, Middle East and North Africa
Rod Harris, Ambassador, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

RE Hon Steven Joyce visit to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia

Purpose and Recommendations

The **purpose** of this report is to:

- record the key elements and main outcomes of Hon Steve Joyce's five day visit to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. His highly substantive programme included calls in **Oman** on the Ministers of Education/Higher Education; the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth; the Minister of Manpower; the President of the Oman Chamber of Commerce; the Secretary-General of MFA; and on Sultan Qaboos University. In **Qatar**, the Minister called on the Minister of Education/Higher Education and on a key senior education official in support of NZ companies, and visited the Qatar Science and Technology Park. In **Saudi Arabia**, the Minister had meetings with the Minister of Higher Education, the Vice Minister of Education, the Governor of the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal, King Saud University's Rector, gave the closing key note address at the International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education where he supported NZ tertiary providers, got wide media coverage, and hosted both a reception for about 130 (including about 30 recent Saudi grads from NZ), and a dinner for over 20 Saudi and NZ business-people.

We **recommend** that:

- consistent ongoing high level government engagement, and close cooperation between education providers and by them with government agencies, will be needed to take full advantage of the considerable and highly lucrative opportunities presented by the education market in the Arab Gulf region.

Summary

1. The five day visit by Hon Steven Joyce, the first to the Gulf by an Education Minister since 2005, has helped to consolidate the significant growth in the education relationship since then and gave NZ's education system strengths considerable public profile, especially in Saudi Arabia. It also lays the foundation both to take the education relationship forward in traditional areas such as tertiary student recruitment, and to pursue newer/emerging opportunities such as RST collaboration, senior secondary school student recruitment, and the enhanced provision of education services

in-market. The demand for these services will continue to grow as Gulf States - faced with youth populations increasing in both numbers and expectations - seek to modernise and improve their compulsory and tertiary education sectors. An MOC in higher education was signed with Oman, and the Education Counsellor and Embassy are working towards finalising a similar MOC with Qatar in the near future.

2. The Minister was accompanied by Press Secretary Simon Beattie, Ambassador Rod Harris, Second Secretary James Munro (in Saudi Arabia), Education Counsellor, Jill Tattersall and Daniel Tasker from ENZ, and regional Trade Commissioner Steve Jones from NZTE.

Meetings

Oman

3. Ministers Joyce and **Dr Rawiyah bin Saud al Busaidiyah (Minister of Higher Education)** signed, at last, the long finalised Memorandum of Cooperation which provides for cooperation on a range of areas including student and staff exchanges, research, quality assurance and qualifications. Very substantive discussions took place over a one hour meeting and subsequent lunch hosted by Dr Rawiyah bin Saud al Busaidiyah who as always was impressive and business-like - and senior members of her staff.

4. Dr Rawiyah began by [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

5. Dr Rawiyah also expressed [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6a ; 6bi

6. With **Dr Madeeha Bint Ahmed bin Nassir Al Shibaniyah, (Minister of Education)** due to visit Hon Hekia Parata in New Zealand in mid-May (she confirmed that a ministerial meeting on 18 May should work), the conversation stuck mostly to high level themes of the kind outlined above. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ^{6a} Dr Madeeha identified [REDACTED]

6bi
[REDACTED] Minister of Manpower Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Abdullah Al Bakri, who has responsibility for technical and vocational training, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

7. Sheikh Abdullah listened especially closely to the Minister's outline of NZ initiatives to develop partnerships between industry and training insitutions. He concluded by stating [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

8. The meeting with Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth Dr Fuad Al-Sajwani focused initially on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

9. Dr Fuad emphasised [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

6bi
Towards the end of the one hour meeting, Minister Joyce noted that his colleague Hon David Carter would be happy to issue an invite to visit NZ; in response, Dr Fuad noted the possibility of adding this to a schedule in late May which would take him to South Korea and Singapore without committing himself to a date.

10. In addition to the formal programme, the Minister hosted a dinner (organised by NZTE) for several education companies (Cognition, Maven, Airways, [REDACTED], ACG) at which they emphasised the need for a more joined up approach by NZ providers in bidding for contracts, and for support from Government agencies. The Minister also hosted a lunch for a group of well-connected local NZ businesspeople and professionals who have expressed interest in forming the nucleus of an Oman-NZ Business Group to help NZ businesses get into the market.

Qatar

11. The one day visit to Qatar was only approved at the 11th hour and despite a last minute indication by Qatar they could in fact sign the Education MOC, this proved impossible (the Education Counsellor's report sent to CE April 21 refers). Nonetheless, Minister Joyce had a substantive and positive meeting with Minister of Education (including Higher Education) Saad bin Ibrahim Al-Mahmood, called on the Director of the Evaluation Institute largely to support contract bids by

NZ companies, and made an impromptu visit to the Qatar Science and Technology Park in anticipation of the latter's visit to NZ from 30 April-4 May.

12. Al-Mahmood began by saying that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

13. The Minister noted that the Memorandum was not quite ready to be signed, but that NZ would welcome Al-Mahmood to NZ should he wish to sign the agreement there. The response was [REDACTED] 6bi
(comment – with agreement on both sides, the NZ Ambassador could sign the MoC within what is likely to be a shorter timeframe). On RST collaboration and in answer to Al-Mahmood's question, the Minister noted that ENZ and the Education Counsellor are the first point of contact for Qatar. During the Minister's visit later that day to the Qatar Science and Technology Park, he was given a short presentation, and then a tour of the QSTP Shell Oil and renewable energy labs by Somali-NZer Mohamed Abdisalam.

14. The Minister also met with the Director of the Evaluation Institute (Dr Hamda al Sulaiti) which sits under the Supreme Education Council, in support of the Cognition/NZQA/NZTC proposal for further work on teacher licensing and teacher qualifications benchmarking (Cognition attended the meeting). Dr Hamda [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

Saudi Arabia

15. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] a key reason for the visit was to support the 21 NZ tertiary institutions and English Language schools taking part in the International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education (IECHE), and a late offer by the Saudi MOHE of the keynote closing address slot provided the Minister a platform to deliver key messages on World Class Teaching Universities to the conference and, aided by NZTE facilitation (see para 33), to a much wider media audience.

16. The Minister's meeting with Minister of Higher Education Dr Khalid Al Angari in the wings of the Conference was cordial and to the point. Al Angari [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

17. Aware of the ongoing Saudi policy of withdrawing students from Christchurch, the Minister noted that both universities and the polytechnic are fully functional and back to delivering normal courses of study. The rebuild had a long way to go, but provided an opportunity to build improved infrastructure. Al-Angar [REDACTED] . [REDACTED] 6a 6bi

[REDACTED] 6bi
[REDACTED] Minister Joyce made a point of thanking Dr Sattam Al-Otaibi, Director of the Saudi Cultural Office in Auckland, for all his help and support (Al Otaibi personally accompanied the delegation through their whole programme in the KSA).

18. In the absence of Minister of Education Prince Faisal bin Abdullah bin Muhammed Al-Saud from Riyadh, Minister Joyce called instead on Vice Minister of Education Dr Khalid Al Sabti. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

19. Al Sabti and senior members of his staff [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

20. In a fruitful one hour meeting with the Governor of the Technical Vocational Training Corporation, Dr Ali bin Nasser Al-Ghafs, the Minister received a full briefing on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Dr Al-Ghafs stated that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

21. Asked if there were any impediments to the relationship, TVTC said [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

22. During the Minister's visit to King Saud University – Saudi's leading tertiary institution – and a tour of some of its labs, the Rector Professor Abdullah Ben Abdul-Rahman Abdullah Al-Othman expressed [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] KSU
6bi

was seeking to [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 6bi

Comments

23. The main aim of Minister Joyce’s visit - to achieve international education outcomes in his tertiary education portfolio – was achieved in all three countries. All those called upon were familiar with the strengths of the NZ compulsory and tertiary education (known locally as “higher” education, technical and vocational training) sectors. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There is a 6bi
general drive, also, to attract good NZ students into their own institutions as these improve in quality and international standing – with many Gulf institutions now offering generous scholarships to this end. In most discussions, the Minister also took the opportunity to outline the roles and functions of the recently established ENZ.

24. In terms of common challenges facing education systems in NZ and the Gulf, considerable interest was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6bi

Conclusion

25. This was the first visit to the region by a New Zealand Minister of Education since 2005, when the modern education relationship was effectively launched. The placement of an Education Counsellor in the Riyadh Embassy over five years ago has been a significant factor in the transformation of the relationship in the intervening seven years. Hon Steven Joyce received a very genuine and positive welcome, met with appropriate Ministers in all three countries, and was accorded generous hospitality. Each of the meetings was warm and focused on the areas in common as well as the opportunities.

26. The visit highlighted the importance of the relationship across all education sectors. It will be important to maintain both the Ministerial contact with the relevant agencies, as well as an exchange of senior education officials. Opportunities have been identified for increasing the

number of scholarship students to New Zealand. However, the focus of the scholarships is moving more towards specialist and post-graduate areas which could result in a plateauing of numbers over the next few years. Ongoing hard work will be needed to maintain the education relationship at all levels if the scholarship programme is to continue in its present state. The three countries are increasingly looking for the kind of collaboration with New Zealand providers which provides a win-win. Each country also commented on the need to encourage New Zealand students to come to this region to study. [REDACTED]

6a ; 6bi

[REDACTED] There may also be scope to now extend the student recruitment relationship into the senior secondary school years, to provide an easier pathway into tertiary study.

27. The experience and expertise of New Zealand in both education and public sector reform was noted. Opportunities were identified in each country for consultancy work for New Zealand providers and companies. These are actively being pursued by the Education Counsellor in conjunction with the appropriate provider and NZTE, with support from the Embassy. It is hoped that a GCC-New Zealand Quality Education Workshop will be held towards the end of the year, which will give Education companies and providers the opportunity to join with key officials from the Ministries of Higher Education and Manpower to discuss quality assurance and qualifications frameworks.
28. MFAT/ENZ/NZTE will work to follow up on the many specific opportunities for the NZ education sector identified throughout this report.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Steven Joyce

19 April, 2012

Closing remarks to the International Exhibition & Conference on Higher Education

Salam alaykum

Tena koutou katoa

Greetings to you all

First, can I say what an absolute privilege it is to be asked to provide the concluding remarks to this wonderful event: the International Exhibition & Conference on Higher Education.

I come from a small country from the other end of the world. New Zealand is a good 17 or 18 hours flight from Riyadh but it is a testament to how truly international that international education is today that every year 7000 Saudi students study in my country.

Those students contribute to the strong linkages between New Zealand and not just Saudi Arabia but the whole six Gulf States, linkages which defy the restrictions of geography.

I have been responsible for Higher Education, or as we call it in New Zealand, Tertiary Education, and for New Zealand's international education relationships for now 2 and half years. And over that time I have spoken with many Ministers from many countries – particularly through what we in New Zealand cheekily call “our bigger backyard of Asia”.

The thing that strikes me when I think of all those interactions is how big an investment is being made in tertiary education around the globe.

Hundreds and hundreds of universities are being developed in India, China, and across South-East Asia.

I was reminded of that pan-global investment as I drove in from the airport here at Riyadh and saw the marvellous campus at the brand new Princess Noura University on my right.

Here in Saudi Arabia and right across the Gulf massive investments are being made in tertiary education as governments rightly see universities and technical institutes as one of the absolutely key platforms for economic development.

All this development brings its own challenges.

Over the next 20 years there will be massive competitive pressure as universities look to recruit senior academics to staff those universities. There will also be a massive increase in the number of graduates around the world.

These facts mean that some of the issues that have been addressed here in this conference over the last two days will be crucial in determining the success of this very large investment.

It strikes me that three things are going to be very crucial:

First, the quality of the learning experience.

Secondly, the relevance of the education for each individual student

And thirdly, whether the education leads to a suitable career after graduation.

Ensuring that a university education is a pathway to a successful career is particularly important.

For that reason I was very pleased to hear the Chief Executive of Saudi Aramco, Khalid Al Falih, outline in his speech yesterday the initiatives being undertaken by his company.

I think there is an absolute need for us to ensure our universities are strongly partnered with our industries and companies in the years ahead to ensure the benefits of a university degree are captured in the careers of students once they graduate.

Those close linkages will also help with ensuring that the university education our young people gain is relevant, which is my second point.

With millions more university graduates around the world, it is important we ensure those graduates are succeeding in disciplines that will help build our economies and ensure that their families see the benefit of the investment they are making in their education.

Thirdly, the method of teaching is crucially important.

The unspoken challenge to the university sector worldwide is whether we can provide sufficient quality teachers that match this upsurge in learning that is going to be occurring.

This is where I think technology is going to play a huge part.

Ultra-fast broadband linkages between our institutions and between our institutions and our students provide a huge range of opportunities for learning which we should all look to take advantage of.

The number of brilliant physicists in the world who have a passion for teaching and explaining complicated physical concepts cannot be changed in the short term. We

now have a technology that enables those people to be beamed into lecture theatres and on line right around the world to inspire our fast-growing number of undergraduates.

The challenge for policy makers is to find funding models and regulatory models that allow and encourage that to happen.

Remote learning is not the whole answer. In my country we have not been able to replicate yet the performance of classroom learning in the purely remote environment.

However, it is the power of blended learning that is really exciting.

The provision of some quality material on line that is truly international or national in scope with the support of teaching and facilitating locally has massive potential to extend the quality of education and expand the opportunity for students around the world.

That model underlines that teaching itself is changing. The internet and programmes within it now mean that all knowledge is available anywhere at any time.

It is the analysis of that knowledge, the ability to synthesis and express it, and use it to create new ideas and innovations that is the real skill we are seeking to teach our young people at university today.

In the new environment, teaching becomes coaching, mentoring, encouraging and facilitating.

In other words, it is much more about learning than teaching.

For that reason I am pleased this session of the conference is focused on structuring universities for effective teaching and learning.

As we wrap up this conference, I would like us all to contemplate for a minute the greater meaning of it and the meaning of the exhibition that is taking place right now alongside this conference.

Higher education is very important for the economic and social goals of the countries involved

However, I think there is a bigger purpose that transcends country boundaries and we are seeing that at play today here in Riyadh.

To me the truly powerful concept in tertiary education in a world context is its ability to foster life-long people to people links right across the globe.

As I said, I live in a small country at the bottom of the world with 4.3 million people.

That little country gets out of bed every day knowing that nobody owes it a living. It has to go out and sell its products and services to the world.

They are good products and great services but nobody has to buy them. And even in this day and age it is a long way for anybody to come.

One of the ways we deal with that risk of isolation is to aggressively trade – not just with our neighbours – but throughout Asia, Europe, the Americas and here in the Gulf.

However, for all those crucial relationships to survive longer term, we need more people around the world that understand us, that have experienced our country and know our people.

That is why international education is so important for us.

It's not just important for New Zealand but is important for every country in the world.

While in many cases our concern with international education and exhibitions like this is to improve the educational outcomes for young people and to improve our economies, the longer-term win for us all is the better interpersonal understanding, better cultural understanding that we all get from having more people from other countries living in our society and more people in our society living and learning from other countries.

To me that is the really powerful concept of international tertiary education.

Many of those 7000 Saudi students that are in New Zealand today will carry forward a lifelong understanding and affection for our country. They will be ambassadors for New Zealand.

Multiply that by hundreds of countries and thousands of links between countries across the world and you have the real power of international tertiary education.

Lifelong linkages provide cultural understanding and economic opportunities across the globe.

Thank you once again to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Ministry of Higher Education for being such generous hosts and for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of New Zealand today.

Can I send my best wishes to you all as we enter an exciting new era of learning that will benefit our teachers, our students and our countries