



U.S.-Oman Trade Bulletin

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MUSCAT AMERICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL - ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING



Ambassador Holtz delivering the welcome remarks.

On February 9, the Muscat American Business Council (MABC) held its annual Town Hall meeting at the Radisson Blu hotel. U.S. Ambassador Holtz welcomed business-people and praised the track record that the MABC has established, promoting not just greater trade and investment between the United States and Oman but also the development of the young Omani workforce. She highlighted MABC's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives as an example of the kind of public-private partnerships the State Department is trying to promote worldwide. The MABC regularly conducts networking, informational, and advocacy activities to advance U.S. trade and investment in Oman. For more information please visit: <http://www.mabcoman.org/>.



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MABC member companies attending included Occidental Oman, DHL, Cisco, OHI, Bechtel and many others.



Emily Shaffer, U.S. Embassy Economic & Commercial Officer, moderated the discussion and solicited feedback from U.S. businesspeople on issues of interest to them.



MABC board member Sarah Jackson, also Country Director at educational NGO Amideast Oman, presented on upcoming 2013 CSR projects, including Internship and Mentoring programs. Many new businesses registered to join MABC and expressed support for its activities.



Nick Porter, U.S. Embassy Regional Security Officer, introduced the launch of an Overseas Security Advisory Council to allow for security-related information and best-practice sharing among U.S. companies in Oman.

THIRD SUCCESSFUL OMANI DELEGATION TO ARAB HEALTH 2013 EXPO

U.S. Embassy Commercial Assistant Ida Mathew led the third successful trade delegation to Arab Health 2013, a U.S. Department of Commerce-certified trade exhibition, held from January 28 to 31 in Dubai. The largest health care exhibition in the Middle East and the second largest in the world, Arab Health 2013 showcased excellent U.S. products and services from the medical and pharmaceutical industry. Over 70,000 professionals from 145 countries attended, and 3000 exhibitors from 60 countries showcased their products and services. This year's U.S. Pavilion (Kallman-certified) had more than 150 exhibitors.

The Omani delegation included 14 health care businesses and hospitals. The Commercial Assistant met with and counseled nearly 50 new-to-market U.S. companies as well as some existing companies, highlighting potential opportunities in Oman and providing matchmaking services. The Omani delegates were provided with comprehensive logistical assistance, including hotel reservations, registration, badge collection, preparation of a professional brochure providing background on Oman's health sector and outlining each company's profile and objectives, and invitations to a high-level networking reception.

U.S. participants remarked that the brochure was useful as it helped them make contact with appropriate Omani delegates. The delegates were provided with an advance list of participating U.S. companies, which enabled them to learn about the companies and to prepare a list of targeted contacts they were interested in meeting.

Arab Health 2014 will be held from January 27 to 30, 2014, in Dubai.



The U.S. Pavilion at Arab Health 2013



U.S. Embassy Commercial Assistant Ida Mathew presents on the healthcare opportunities in Oman to the U.S. companies exhibiting at Arab Health.

INAUGURAL PRIVATE EQUITY DELEGATION TO OMAN



In her remarks, Ambassador Holtz emphasized that, despite the ups and downs of the global economy, investing in the United States has many fundamental advantages, including American founding values of diversity, innovation, and creativity.

Following up on our successful “Invest in America” event in October 2012, a U.S. Dept of Commerce-organized trade mission on February 6 allowed for direct matchmaking between visiting U.S. private equity fund managers ranked in the top 10%, and Omani investors and fund managers seeking diversified returns. This inaugural Private Equity Trade Mission strengthened economic and commercial ties between the United States and Oman as it opens the door for greater bilateral investment. Economic & Commercial Officer Emily Shaffer welcomed the participants. American asset managers were introduced to high net worth fund managers from the Sultanate of Oman. Informative presentations and panel discussions provided Omani investors and fund managers with a better understanding of the U.S. economic landscape and strategic approaches to investing in America’s growth. There was ample time for individual matchmaking with the visiting top-tier U.S. private equity firms. A second United States private equity delegation will return to Oman in December 2013.



WOMEN INVESTING IN WOMEN EVENT



More than 35 prominent Omani businesswomen gathered at the Ritz Carlton Al-Bustan Palace for a roundtable discussion on women's financial literacy and empowerment on February 6.

Ambassador Holtz noted that "Women participating in business and policy should be welcomed as a source for new and diverse ideas from fresh perspectives", and that "Economic development is not a zero-sum game; women's participation can create winners without creating losers."



Invited guests share a laugh during the discussion on "Women Investing in Women".



WIIW Founder Anu Bhardwaj makes a point, while Manal al-Abdwani, Director General of Planning & Follow-Up at the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Sharifa al-Barami, owner of Al-Jazeera Technical Solutions on her left, and Nashia al-Kharusi, President of the Muscat branch of the Oman Women's Association (at her right) look on.

Misha Daud, Owner of Eye Candy boutique, addresses the group, while Ubhar restaurant owner Ghada al-Yousef, and Farah al-Hinai, Organizational Development Manager at Bank Muscat, look on.



U.S. Embassy Political & Economic Officer Erin Clancy described Embassy's engagement with Omani women's group and welcomed further partnership.

AMBASSADOR VISITS OXY'S MUKHAIZNA FIELD



L-R: Bob Swain, Oxy Mukhaizna VP; Sandy Lowe, Oxy Oil & Gas International President; Abdullah Al Ghailani, Oxy MVC Supervisor; Ashraf Al Mahrouqi, Oxy Lead Operator; Isam Al Zadjali, Oxy President & General Manager; Ambassador Holtz; Abdullah Al Habsi, Oxy Water Delivery Team Leader; Emily Shaffer, U.S. Embassy Economic & Commercial Officer; Khalil Al Balushi, U.S. Embassy Security Officer.

U.S. Ambassador Greta C. Holtz toured Oxy's Mukhaizna oilfield on March 16, which is developing the field in a 30-year concession on behalf of the Ministry of Oil and Gas. The Ambassador was shown the advanced technology used to thermally inject and extract heavy oil before refining and export. Mukhaizna is the third largest steam flood oilfield in the world, and the largest and first of its kind in the region. Since taking over the 3000 foot-deep field in 2005, Oxy has achieved record results, ramping production from only 8000 barrels per day (bpd) to more than 120,000 bpd today. Ambassador Holtz also had the opportunity to learn about Oxy's scholarship and "On-the-Job" training programs that have contributed to the company achieving 80 percent Omanization, hiring many residents of the Mukhaizna region and preparing them for successful engineering careers. (Oxy is one of the largest employers in Oman, with 2000 direct employees and 6000-7000 contractors.) Oxy also provides potable water to surrounding villages and supports various other Corporate Social Responsibility causes in Oman.

BECHTEL ORGANIZES EMPLOYEE CRICKET MATCH



BEB security manager Everett King, BEB Government Relations Manager Sean Dudamar, Bechtel Project Director Mike Lewis, Civil Aviation Authority CEO Salim al-Aufi, Indian Ambassador J.S. Mukhul, Ambassador Holtz, Economic & Commercial Officer Emily Shaffer, Political & Labor Officer Amelia Mathias, Indian Embassy Welfare Officer Sanjaya Asthana.

Bechtel Project Director Mike Lewis handed over the trophy to the winning team, "Yummy Yummy", composed of camp catering staff.



On Friday, March 29, Ambassador Holtz attended an employee cricket match organized by Bechtel's local consortium (including Turkish firm Enka and local partner Bahwan). Bechtel is currently constructing the passenger terminal for Oman's new flagship international airport in Muscat. Bechtel employs hundreds of Omani employees and offers internship programs for Omani engineering students. The consortium, known as "BEB," houses up to 12,000 expatriate construction workers in their labor camp, offering cricket, football, basketball, badminton and tennis facilities, as well as a 24-hour clinic, religious chapels, money exchange, and movie theaters.

EMBASSY MUSCAT HOSTS COMMERCIAL LAW DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE



U.S. Embassy Economic & Commercial Officer Emily Shaffer and James Filpi with young Omani lawyers Thamer al-Shahry and Sausan Al-Balushi.

James Filpi presenting brochures on employment rights to Ahmed al-Mukhaini, director of the Said al-Shahry Law Office (SASLO) training center.



James Filpi presenting Mohammed al-Shahry, senior mentor of the younger lawyers at the Oman Lawyers Association, with Arabic employment rights guides .

On March 2, 2013, James D. Filpi, Senior Counsel with the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) of the United States Department of Commerce, visited Muscat and met with members of the Omani Lawyers Association. Mr. Filpi provided an update on U.S. government capacity assistance in the area of commercial law, e.g., government procurement, insolvency, and business registration. He also provided them with helpful resources, including American Legal English handbooks and referrals to American federal and state bar associations, which can support the Oman Lawyers Association with advice, experience, and insight on professionalizing the organization to offer the new generation of local lawyers best-practice bar examinations, Continuing Legal Education, and ethical regulation. The Omani Lawyers Association has been formally requested to take over regulation and development of the legal profession from the Ministry of Justice.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP TALKS IN SOHAR AND RUSTAQ



In January, Economic and Commercial Officer Emily Shaffer and Political Officer Erin Clancy spoke to students at Sohar University about entrepreneurship in Oman and the United States. Emily Shaffer highlighted the importance of co-operation among all sectors, including academia, government regulators, and financiers in encouraging entrepreneurs in Oman. She remarked that young Omanis have tremendous potential to become entrepreneurs, saying “With education and training, we can work together to nurture young entrepreneurs in Oman.” The presentation highlighted particular strengths of the American system in supporting entrepreneurship, such as a conducive commercial regulatory framework, including modern bankruptcy provisions and special tender procurement set-asides for SMEs; a cultural acceptance of failure; and a high value placed on diversity, creativity, individualism, and competitiveness. Emily Shaffer also presented on entrepreneurship to students and faculty at the Rustaq College of Applied Sciences.



INTERNATIONAL
TRADE
ADMINISTRATION

The SelectUSA Investment Summit

The U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration announced details of the first-ever SelectUSA Investment Summit. Event details are as follows:

Location: Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
Washington, D.C.
Date: October 31-November 1, 2013



Who will attend

Participants and attendees at the two-day event will include:

- International and domestic investors
- U.S. economic development organizations (EDOs)
- Senior White House officials
- State and local government representatives
- Business leaders
- Industry and technical specialists
- Service providers
- Subject-matter experts

Why you should attend

Connect with both foreign and domestic investors, senior Administration officials, and state and local officials. Learn how to more effectively identify, target, and execute your investment attraction strategy.

Summit benefits

Attendees will have access to:

- Unique networking opportunities and one-on-one meetings
- Moderated panels on the latest investment trends and sector analysis
- Break-out sessions about investment opportunities and programs
- Information about investment-related resources in the United States
- Exhibits from U.S. state and local (including regions and cities) EDOS

To learn more

- Email SelectUSASummit@SelectUSA.gov
- Call SelectUSA at +1-202-482-6800

What is SelectUSA

SelectUSA, located within the International Trade Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, leads the federal government efforts to promote the United States as the premier global investment destination, and facilitates investment in the United States. SelectUSA provides information assistance to the global investment community, serves as an ombudsman for investors, and advocates for U.S. cities, states, and regions competing for global investment.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meeting and Clinical Lab Expo 2013
Products: Clinical Lab and Healthcare Products.
Location: Houston, TX
Date: July 28—August 1, 2013
www.aacc.org

AUVSI Unmanned Systems North America 2013
Products: Military / Commercial Unmanned Products .
Location: Washington D.C., D.C.
Date: August 13-16, 2013
www.auvsishow.org

MAGIC Marketplace 2013
Products: Apparel, Accessories, and Footwear .
Location: Las Vegas, NV
Date: August 21-23, 2013
www.magiconline.com

