



ASSISTANT TREASURER

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**PRESS
RELEASE**

ASSISTANT TREASURER MEETS PRIME MINISTER OF QATAR

The Assistant Treasurer, Senator Nick Sherry, today met with His Excellency Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar.

This follows talks also held today with His Excellency Yousef Hussain Kamal, Qatar Minister for the Economy and Finance.

“The Australian-Qatari bilateral relationship is strong and growing much stronger – as today’s important dialogue illustrates,” said the Assistant Treasurer.

“The Prime Minister affirmed the depth of this relationship and indicated a strong desire to build even closer economic ties, increase bilateral trade and investments and further boost people-to-people ties between our two countries.”

“Importantly, Prime Minister Al-Thani indicated that he will organise a high-level Qatari delegation to Australia to occur within the year. The Prime Minister also indicated that he would like to visit Australia.”

“I indicated, on behalf of Prime Minister Rudd and the Australian Government, that we would warmly welcome such a delegation.”

The relationship between Australia and Qatar is underpinned by long-standing trade ties and also close defence cooperation.

In 2009, two-way merchandise trade between Australia and Qatar was valued at A\$563 million and approximately 3,000 Australians live and work in Qatar in a variety of fields such as education, construction, banking, aviation and event management. People-to-people links have been strengthened after Qatar Airways began direct flights to Melbourne late last year.

“We have much to gain from continuing to strengthen our bilateral trade and economic links, and as the Qatari Prime Minister indicated strongly today, the fundamentals are there for further significant growth and investment,” said the Assistant Treasurer.

“Australia is also very keen to further broaden and strengthen our relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to cover foreign, trade, strategic and security cooperation, including an inaugural GCC-Australia Foreign Ministers Strategic Dialogue.”

The Assistant Treasurer also held talks in Qatar with the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority and the Qatar Islamic Bank.

DOHA, QATAR

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Media Contacts: Adam Wand (Doha) 0414 89 89 81
Joe Scavo (Canberra) 0413 800 757