



(From left) Doha Bank CEO Dr R Seetharaman, Dr Sayuri Shirai, and India's former foreign secretary Ranjan Mathai at the Doha Bank knowledge sharing session.

Political, economic convergence needed for sustainable global growth, says Doha Bank CEO

Doha Bank hosted a knowledge sharing session titled 'Changing Global Economics and their Impact on Growth Momentum' at the Doha Bank Tower in West Bay on Sunday.

Doha Bank CEO Dr R Seetharaman delivered the concept note in the presence of Dr Sayuri Shirai, a professor at KEIO University in Japan and former member of the Bank of Japan's policy board, and India's former foreign secretary Ranjan Mathai, as well as other VIP guests.

On global economic growth and the challenges ahead, Seetharaman said global growth for 2018 and 2019 is projected at 3.7% in October 2018, and remains unchanged for 2019 as per the World Economic Outlook report by the IMF.

"In the US, momentum is still strong as fiscal stimulus continues to increase, but the forecast for 2019 has been revised down due to recently announced trade measures, including the tariffs imposed on \$200bn worth of US imports from China. Growth projections have been marked down for the euro area and the UK, following surprises that suppressed activity in early 2018," Seetharaman said. On Qatar's economy, Seetharaman cited the IMF, saying Qatar is expected to grow by 2.7% in 2018 and 2.8% in 2019. He said the growth "is revised marginally

upwards," adding that Qatar's banking system "needs no further support from the central bank and the sovereign wealth fund as the decline in non-resident liabilities of lenders have subsided." In a presentation, Shirai said the Japanese economy is currently the third largest with a size of \$5tn and a per capita GDP of \$40,000, and the largest international creditor. She said savings rate fell in 2009-2013 but has picked up as a percentage to overall GDP.

"The total foreign asset is \$3tn or 64% of GDP, which is the largest in the world. The composition of FDI flows is 33% from the US, 27% from Asia, 27% from Europe, 10% from China and Hong Kong, 5% from Australia, and 7% from Latin America.

"The challenges that Japan faces today is that it is shifting from export-oriented to investment-driven, a most progressive ageing society, labour shortage, and restraining labour productivity growth on account of shift from manufacturing to services oriented," Shirai said.

Mathai spoke on "the challenge to the globalist world order," and an intensification of geopolitical competition. He examined the election of US President Donald Trump, Brexit, China's rejection of the World Court ruling on South China Sea, and Russia's intervention in Syria.