

Qatar-China ties have potential to grow, says Seetharaman

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THE bilateral relations between Qatar and China have the potential to grow, said Doha Bank CEO Dr R Seetharaman, while addressing a virtual client conference hosted by the bank on Wednesday.

The “Bilateral and Synergistic Opportunities between Qatar and China” webinar was addressed by Sara Sada, Counsellor, Embassy of Qatar in China, Liu Chun, Vice President, China Chamber of Commerce for Machinery and Electronic Products Import and Export (CCCME), Liu Yao, Secretary General of the Chinese Business Council in Qatar and the General Manager of the Corporate Finance Department at Bank of China’s QFC Branch and Henry Wong, Partner, M&A and Private Equity Tax, KPMG Advisory (China) Limited.

Peter Lo, Chief Representative Officer, Doha Bank

Shanghai Representative office gave the Welcome and Introductory note.

Dr Seetharaman thanked HE Mohamed Al Dehaimi, Ambassador of Qatar to China and HE Zhou Jian, the Ambassador of China to Qatar for co-operation to conduct the conference successfully.

Providing insights on global economy, Seetharaman said, citing the World Bank’s June 2021 report, that the world economy was expected to grow by 5.6 percent in 2021.

The advanced economies are expected to grow by 5.4 percent in 2021 and emerging market and developing economies by 6 percent in 2021.

“The Chinese economy is expected to grow by 8.5 percent in 2021. In May 2021, China took measures to pull back the yuan from a three-year high. The People’s Bank of China stated that financial institutions will need to increase the ratio of their foreign exchange deposits. The central



Dignitaries addressing the “Bilateral and Synergistic Opportunities between Qatar and China” webinar.

bank set the yuan’s midpoint fix weaker against the U.S. dollar.”

On Qatari economy, he said, “The Qatar banking sector witnessed a lending growth of more than 5 percent in the first four months of this year. Qatar’s fiscal 2021 had earmarked QR194.7 billion for spending.

“This year, Qatar has come out with ambitious expansion

plans on the LNG segment. In December 2020, Qatar Central Bank launched new currency notes. The easing of the 3.5-year-old regional dispute since Jan 2021 will improve trade, tourism and logistics.

Addressing Qatar-China ties, Seetharaman said, in March 2021, Qatar and China signed a protocol amending the agreement for the avoidance of double taxation and

preventing financial evasions concerning income taxes between their governments.

In May 2021, Qatar Petroleum signed a 10-year LNG deal with China. Qatar will supply China’s Sinopec with 2 million tonnes per year. China is ready to work with Qatar to deepen cooperation in the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as well as in fighting the COVID-19 pan-

demic. China also extends full support to Qatar in hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. China is an attractive destination for Qatari investors, in the areas of shipbuilding, manufacturing, petro-chemical, high-tech, hotel services, tourism, and financial services, among others.

Sara Sada gave insight on Qatar – China relationships and trade ties.

“Since 1988 the diplomatic relationships begins and gradually progressed across all spectrum of areas. In 2014 we witnessed strategic partnership after witness of HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani visit to china. In economic area they are working to promote trade. Bilateral trade is mainly on LNG and chemicals. China is second largest of buyer of LNG.”

Liu Chun gave insight on bilateral opportunities between Qatar and China. “In recent years, China and Qatar relations have developed com-

prehensively and rapidly. In 2020, bilateral trade volume between the 2 countries recorded as USD 10.9 billion.”

Liu Yao highlighted the key attractions about doing business in and with Qatar. HE said these included Qatar’s stable political position amongst Middle East countries, top tier GDP per capita, fast growing economy and others.

“China has competitive edge in IT technology and equipped with leading skills in infrastructure construction. Also, Chinese entrepreneurs are quick to react to fast changing market conditions and efficient in cost control. This will enable Chinese investors to succeed in the Qatari market. The China Business Council in Qatar could provide valuable market information and organize business trips to both Qatar and China,” he said.

Henry Wong presented common topics of concern (from a tax perspective) on cross border investment.