**Press Release**

**QTA and QDB to hold Qatar Tourism Investor Opportunities to boost the Qatari tourism sector**

**Doha, Qatar; 23 February 2014:** The Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA) and Qatar Development Bank (QDB) launched a media campaign to invite commercial businesses and members of the private sector to Qatar tourism Investment Opportunities event to support the country’s goal of becoming a world class and hospitality destination, as part of the National Tourism Sector Strategy scheduled to be announced on the 23rd of February hub with deep cultural roots.

Entrepreneurs and business leaders in Qatar are invited to attend the event on the 2nd of March where details of six investment opportunities will be revealed, each of which is intended to be developed by a private sector partner with support from QTA and QDB. The six projects will be the first phase of a series of investment opportunities and relate to dhow cruises; luxury coaches; 4x4 leasing; a cottage market; Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions (“MICE”) Destination Management Company ("DMC”); and integrated ticking and mobile information centres. A procurement process will begin following the Qatar tourism Investment Opportunities event to select a suitable developer for each project.

Commenting on the partnership, His Excellency Issa bin Mohammed Al Mohannadi, Chairman of QTA, said: “Tourism is a growing pillar of the expanding Qatari economy, driven by the fact that Qatar is one of the fastest developing leisure and business tourism markets in the world today. QTA is leading the maturation and the development of a sustainable tourism sector, which includes increased private sector involvement, via its high-impact programs.. The Qatar tourism Investment Opportunities event in partnership with QDB is an initiative to showcase to potential private sector investors - entrepreneurs, SMEs and corporations – the potential this rapidly growing sector offers, and the incentive available to participate in its growth. ”

Mr. Abdulaziz bin Nasser Al-Khalifa, CEO of QDB, said: “Our partnership with QTA falls in line with QDB’s aim to enhance the private sector’s contribution to Qatar’s economy. The importance of our efforts is to identify gaps in the tourism sector and then help the Qatari private sector fill them by converting these gaps into doable and achievable opportunities. Tourism is a strategically important component of developing a non-hydrocarbon economy towards the achievement of Qatar National vision 2030. We at QDB are mandated to support and stimulate the private sector and SME growth in the tourism sector and these six projects have been selected as a first phase because they are attractive to the private sector while having enormous potential to benefit the local tourism sector; this is a phase one of many more opportunities that will be displayed to the private sector in due course time.”

Successful bidders will receive benefit from QTA assistance with obtaining licenses; access to development and operating guidelines; priority booking for QTA functions and events; visibility on the authority’s websites and social media platforms; and, wherever possible, exposure at international tourism exhibitions. They will also low interest rate loans and extended repayment periods from QDB.

The Qatar tourism Investment Opportunities event will take place in the Mirqab Hall at the Four Seasons Hotel on Sunday, March 2, 2014 at 4:00pm.

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About Qatar Tourism Authority

Qatar Tourism Authority’s (QTA) mission is to plan, regulate, develop and promote sustainable tourism in Qatar with the aim of driving economic growth and social impact and enabling authentic experiences, business facilitation, and family-focused recreation. Offering a range of products and services from culture and heritage, MICE, leisure, sport and education, Qatar’s tourism sector has a rich blend of attractions to suit all tourists.

QTA works to showcase the country’s unique cultural heritage and exciting tourist attractions to lead the transformation of Qatar into a world-class destination with deep cultural roots. With numerous venues for business and 45 four- and five-star hotels, Qatar is already a leading high-end destination for MICE, situated centrally between Europe and Asia.

About Qatar Development Bank (QDB)

Qatar Development Bank (QDB) was established in 1997 as the Qatar Industrial Development Bank, a 100% government-owned developmental organisation. Its primary aim was to develop investments within local industries, thereby accelerating growth and economic diversification in Qatar through support for private sector. Between 1997 and 2005, the bank expanded its portfolio, diversifying from its industrial base to include support and guidance for a range of non-industrial sectors identified as key to the development of Qatar. Shortly afterwards, the bank revisited its mission statement to reflect the successful completion of its new strategic objective and changed its name to Qatar Development Bank. The State of Qatar, QDB’s sole shareholder, increased the bank's capital from 200 million to 10 billion riyals in 2008. Since that time, and reflecting the expansion of its mission and financial assets, QDB has launched a considerable number of strategic initiatives and programs, all designed to directly contribute to the economic growth and development of Qatar.

QDB’s strategy is entirely in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. It is focused on promoting and facilitating the growth of the private sector in Qatar within key economic channels. In turn, this support will enable the development of long term, sustainable social and economic benefits across the economy.

Aside from offering financial support, Qatar Development Bank is tasked with promoting entrepreneurship in the private sector, facilitating the development of key economic sectors through the provision of capital and advisory services. QDB has also launched several initiatives, including Al Dhameen program, an indirect loan facility to guarantee commercial bank loans to private sector companies, in collaboration with other banks and financial institutions.

QDB’s export arm “Tasdeer” program was created to develop and promote exports from Qatar, providing export credit guarantees in addition to financial products and solutions designed to mitigate the risks imposed on local exporters. The bank also provides consulting services in business development to help entrepreneurs to prepare for business. This will include feasibility studies, the conduct of market research and the selection of appropriate techniques; fundamentally helping to develop the capabilities of SME owners to enhance and refine their skills in the market and establish strong ties with financial and non-financial support entities.