

**PREMIER'S VISIT TO LEBANON AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
12 – 18 MAY 2012**

POST VISIT REPORT – LEBANON PROGRAM

MISSION PURPOSE

- To highlight the importance the NSW Government is placing on Lebanon as a valued friend and growing trading partner.
- To strengthen the cultural ties between the NSW Government and Lebanon, especially those forged during the recent Presidential visit.
- To achieve high level access to government leaders to reinforce the NSW Government's commitment to Lebanese-Australians.

MISSION DESCRIPTION

The Premier's delegation included three Members of Parliament of Lebanese heritage, as well as three representatives of the Lebanese-Australian community including the Islamic Council of NSW and the Lebanese Muslim Association.

It also included the Director-General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Australian Ambassador to Lebanon.

The group represented the broad spectrum of Lebanese-Australians with extensive relationships in Lebanon.

Meetings were sought with the following:

- Political leadership at all levels of government;
- Leaders from the four major religions – Maronite, Druze, Sunni and Shi'a.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Government-to-Government meetings were held with the following:
 - His Excellency General Michel Sleiman, President of the Republic of Lebanon (President of the Council of Ministers)
 - His Excellency Najib Mikati, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon
 - His Excellency Nabih Berri, Speaker of Parliament (President of the National Assembly)
- Working lunch was held in the Presidential Palace hosted by the President, and attended by the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister Mokbel, Foreign Minister Mansour, Information Minister Daouk, and Public Works and Transport Minister Aridi.
- Meetings were held with Mayors and other community leaders from the Bcharre region including:
 - Antoine Taouk (Mayor of Bcharre)

- Elie Makhoul (President of the Federation of Municipalities of Bcharre and Mayor of Baakafra)
 - Robert Karam (Mayor of Barhalyoun)
 - Hanna Faddoul (Mayor of Bazoun)
 - Salim Abi Tamer (Mayor of Bkarkasha)
 - George Shidrawi (Mayor of Hadath Jobbeh)
 - Elie Homsy (Mayor of Hadshit)
 - Laaba Awwad (Mayor of Hasroun)
 - Youssef Maksoud (Mayor of Tourza)
 - Shallita Karam (Mayor of Qnat)
 - Nabil Bou Nasr (Mayor of Abdin)
 - Joseph Khodeir (Mayor of Ban)
 - Dr. Tarek Chidiac (President of Gibran National Committee)
 - Members of the Municipal Council of Bcharre
- Delegation met with Mayors and community leaders from the Al Minieh region, including:
 - Kazem el Kheir (MP for Minieh-Dinieh)
 - Dr Ahmad Fatfat (MP for Minieh-Dinieh)
 - Dr Kassem Abdul Aziz (MP for Minieh-Dinieh)
 - Mr Nassif Kaloush (Governor of the North)
 - Mahmoud Ibrahim (Mayor of Kfarbibnine)
 - Nazih Obeid (Mayor of Ein El Tineh)
 - Said Mustapha Abdul Aal (Mayor of Azki)
 - Mohammad Abdul Salam Saadiye (Mayor of Deir Nabouh and head of the Federation of Municipalities of Minieh)
 - Mohammad Ali Haidar (Mayor of Katin)
 - Ahmad Alam (Mayor of Sir)
 - Mustapha Hussein Diab (Mayor of Beit Fakes)
 - Mouatasseem Hassan Abdul Kader (Mayor of Aassoun)
 - Hussein Ali Harmoush (Mayor of Safira)
 - Rahif Mohammad Abdul Rahman (Mayor of Izal)
 - Mounir Kanj (Mayor of Bikaa Asfarin)
 - Bahaa Atouf El Bitar (Mayor of Kfar Habou)
 - Moustapha Mahmoud Arbes (Mayor of Namrin)
 - Boulos Anis Shami (Mayor of Haki Azime)
 - Mustapha Mohammad Korra (Mayor of Btarmaz)
 - Mohammad Ahmad Bakkour (Mayor of Bkarsouna)
 - Midhat Hassan Hamdan (Mayor of Harf Sayyad)
 - Oussam Kamal Trad (Mayor of Taran)
 - Ghassan Naim Mouawwad (Mayor of Aimar)
 - Mohammad Mahmoud Alloush (Mayor of Karsita)
 - Nasser Ahmad El Shami (Mayor of Kfar Shillan)
 - Khaled Mahmoud Diab (Mayor of Mirah Siraj)
 - Ghazi Mustapha Awwad (Mayor of Mirah Safira)
 - Khoder Shafshaq (Mayor of Hazmieh)
 - Milad Maroun Ishak (Mayor of Karam Mohr)
 - Antoine Houry (Mayor of Behwita)
 - Mustapha Akl (Mayor of Minieh)
 - Khaled Dheiby (Mayor of Deir Ammar)
 - Khoder Oweiyek (Mayor of Bourj Yahoudiya)

- Mustapha Wehbe (Mayor of Bhannin)
 - Hassan Ghamrawy (Mayor of Beddawi)
 - Nazir Shami (Mayor of Markabta)
 - Toufic Mouawwad (Mayor of Zgharta Ehden)
 - Tony Sleiman (Head of the Federation of Municipalities of Zgharta)
- Meetings were held with senior religious leaders including:
 - Sheikh Hassan El Hajj Shehade (representative from the Sunni Religious Court, Beirut)
 - Sheikh Alaeddine Sharara (representative from the Higher Islamic Shi'a Council)
 - Judge Ghandi Makarem, Head of the Druze Religious Court (for the Metn area)
 - Father Abdo Abou Kassam (representative for the Maronite Patriarch)
 - Melkite Archbishop of Zahle, Issam John Darwich
 - Delegation toured the Mohammad Al Amin Mosque, led by Kazem El Kheir MP. This included paying tribute at the Rafik Hariri memorial.
 - Delegation toured Qozhya Monastery - guided by Father Anthony Tohmeh. Also present was Father Youssef Suleiman and Father Raymond Kairouz (all Lebanese Australians).
 - Premier was honoured with an Honorary Doctorate from the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to engage with political leadership in Lebanon to further strengthen the relationship.
- Destination NSW to explore tourism opportunities for Lebanon.

**PREMIER'S VISIT TO LEBANON AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
12 – 18 MAY 2012**

POST VISIT REPORT – UAE PROGRAM

MISSION PURPOSE

- Demonstrate the NSW Government's commitment to strengthening its export development and broader trade and investment relationships with the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- Promote NSW capabilities in the areas of infrastructure/construction, financial services, education and manufactured food product exports.
- Reinforce to government, commercial and media audiences the strength of the NSW economy as Australia's largest State; support NSW's broad range of exporters of services and manufactured goods; and profile NSW breadth and range of NSW investment opportunities.
- Meet with key prospective and existing investors and importers of NSW products and services.
- Increase awareness of the NSW Government Business Office in the UAE and the services it provides to existing and new investors and trade partners in the region.

VISIT DESCRIPTION

Immediately following the Premier's community visit to Lebanon, the Premier conducted a busy three day visit to the UAE. This program comprised four government meetings, eight business meetings, eight targeted business events and two media interviews (refer to program summary below).

The two largest Emirates were visited: Abu Dhabi as it is the centre of government and UAE finance, and location of the NSW Trade & Investment office; and Dubai, one of the region's major business centres. Both Emirates are home to key investors in NSW including the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, Emirates Group and DP World.

The priority sectors selected for this visit were infrastructure/construction, financial services, education and NSW food product exports. These sectors were chosen because they:

- all align closely with both UAE and NSW economic development priorities
- offer strong two-way trade and investment opportunities
- are sectors which are inter-linked.

The UAE program was an adjunct to the Premier's larger community visit to Lebanon. The NSW delegation accompanying the Premier to UAE was therefore limited to two Department of Premier and Cabinet staff and the participating Lebanese community leaders. No NSW business leaders participated in the visit to the UAE.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. Abu Dhabi Investment Authority: The Premier updated ADIA on key infrastructure investment opportunities in NSW and encouraged further investments by ADIA in NSW. ADIA is very interested in the opportunities to be profiled in the soon-to-be-released NSW Infrastructure Strategy.
2. Pacific Controls Systems: The Premier met with the company chairman and confirmed the ICT firm's plan of establishing a 24x7 global command control centre in Sydney that will create jobs, drive innovation and foster research and development in NSW.
3. UAE airlines: The Premier discussed with key executives of the main UAE-based carriers the potential to increase in services to Sydney Airport and initiatives to help grow the market.
4. UAE Minister of State: The Premier and HE Reem Al-Hashimy discussed the UAE bid to host World Expo 2020 and the high level of specialised skills and experience NSW could provide to assist with the bid and the organising should the UAE bid be successful.
5. University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD): Premier officially opened Teaching Block 14 at UOWD at a ribbon-cutting ceremony and delivered an address to highlight the link between education, service exports and business investment. At this event the Premier also met with influential membership of the Australian Business Council Dubai and Australian Business Group, Abu Dhabi, where he communicated key areas of opportunity for growth between UAE and NSW.
6. Islamic Finance Round Table: the Premier met with key senior UAE finance specialists and discussed the potential of Islamic finance in NSW. The Premier reconfirmed his commitment to attracting both conventional and Islamic finance investment into infrastructure and other sectors in NSW, and as an important part of the NSW Government's efforts to enhance Sydney's position as a leading international financial services centre.
7. Milk & Honey: The Premier officially opened a new retail outlet which distributes a range of NSW gourmet food items in one of Dubai's prestigious residential areas. Milk & Honey stocks quality products from 14 separate NSW exporters and the NSW Government continues to provide information on new potential suppliers from the State. Milk & Honey have indicated increased interest and demand as a result of the visit has sparked their interest in investigating the possible establishment of a trading office in NSW.
8. Dubai International Finance Centre (DIFC) – NSW partnership: NSW and DIFC signed an MOU which recognises that Sydney and Dubai have common interests, expertise and objectives, and which will further support the promotion of unexplored investment opportunities between NSW and the GCC region among potential investors from both sides. NSW is the only Australian State to have such an agreement.
9. High level government to government meetings were held with HE Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of Foreign Trade and HE Sheikha Reem Al-Hashimy, Minister of

State, where the Premier reiterated the strong ties between the two governments. The Minister accompanied a trade delegation to Sydney in June where the Premier and NSW were able to provide hospitality, industry briefings and other assistance to a range of UAE businesses.

10. A meeting was also held with HH Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum (son of former Emir of Dubai and uncle of the current ruler of Dubai), President of the Department of Civil Aviation, CEO and Chairman of The Emirates Group and Chairman of Dubai World.
11. The mission and key NSW messages were profiled eight times in six separate business media outlets in the UAE.

Program summary

16 May 2012

1. Australian Ambassador to UAE, HE Mr Pablo Kang
2. Mr James Hogan, Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Airways
3. Abu Dhabi Investment Authority meeting
4. HE Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, Minister of Foreign Trade
5. Pacific Controls meeting
6. DP World meeting
7. Pacific Controls networking business reception and working dinner

Thursday 17 May 2012

8. Dubai International Finance Centre meeting and MOU signing
9. The National newspaper - interview
10. Dubai International Finance Centre seminar
11. HH Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman, Emirates Group
12. Mr Tim Clark, President, Emirates Airlines
13. HE Reem Al-Hashimy, Minister of State
14. Dubai Government Islamic Finance Round Table & luncheon
15. Radio 103.8 Dubai Eye 'Business Breakfast' radio program interview
16. University of Wollongong Dubai (UOWD) new facility opening and networking reception
17. Emirates Group and Jumeirah Group working dinner

Friday 18 May 2012

18. Tour of Dubai infrastructure
19. Visit to Gloria Jean's Coffees outlet, Dubai Mall
20. UAE Exchange meeting
21. Milk & Honey official ribbon cutting ceremony
22. HUB Street Equipment, Manrat Al Sadiyat

Estimated costs and details of travel

Minister	The Honourable Barry O'Farrell MP
Portfolio	Premier of New South Wales and Minister for Western Sydney
Countries visited	Lebanon
Cities visited	(a) Beirut (b) Byblos (c) Qozhya (Monastery of) (d) Bcharre (e) Al Minie (f) Kaslik (g) Achrafieh
	United Arab Emirates (a) Abu Dhabi (b) Dubai
Date of travel	Departed Saturday 12 May 2012 Returned Saturday 19 May 2012
Number of accompanying:	
(a) Ministerial staff	(a) 1
(b) Government officials	(b) 2
(c) Parliamentary delegation	(c) 3
(d) Media delegation	(d) 2
(e) Community delegation	(e) 3
Accompanied by spouse in an official capacity	No
Air fares	
(a) Minister and Ministerial Staff	(a) \$ 15,014
(b) Government Officials	(b) \$ 15,268
Accommodation and meals	
(a) Minister and Ministerial Staff	(a) \$ 3,141
(b) Government Officials	(b) \$ 3,353

Premier hosted hospitality expenses	\$ 7,824
Official meetings & hospitality expenses Includes Minister, Ministerial Staff & Government Officials, business representatives and other guests	\$ 674
Official gift presentation expenses	
(a) Minister and Ministerial Staff	(a) \$ 4,898
(b) Government Officials	(b) \$ 999
Reconnaissance expenses (including accommodation, ground transport, meals and incidental expenses)	\$ 6,195
Other expenses (including interpreters, meals not covered above, refreshments and surface travel, freight)	
(a) Ground and surface transport	(a) \$ 4,377
(b) Other	(b) \$ 3,251
Total estimated travel costs	\$64,994

Note: currency conversion cost estimates are based on:

- For UAE (AED) and Lebanon (USD): <http://www.rba.gov.au/statistics/hist-exchange-rates/index.html>
- For Lebanon (LBP - Lebanese Pounds): <http://www.xe.com/>

Note: Any outstanding costs will be updated in the finalisation of expenses.