



# **SECOND HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

## **Information Note for Participants**

As of: 28 December 2012

## Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management

These information notes have been compiled to assist you in the preparation for your participation in the **Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management**.

### ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETINGS

The UN-GGIM Secretariat, in collaboration with the Government of Qatar, through its Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning and Qatar Statistics Authority, will be hosting the Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) in Doha, Qatar from 4-6 February 2013 at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

The program for the Forum begins on Sunday, 3 February 2013 with an ‘Exchange Forum with the Geospatial Industry’. The main Forum begins on Monday, 4 February 2013, with an opening ceremony and ministerial segment, followed by various technical sessions on a range of topics. The opening session shall start at 9:00am. At the margins of the main Forum, a side-event on “Regional Cooperation in Geospatial Management”, focusing on the geospatial information management issues within the ESCWA region, shall be held on Thursday, 7 February 2013.

### Map of the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) Vicinity



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**Address and Contact Numbers**

**UN-GGIM Secretariat**

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**Working Language(s) of the meetings**

The Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management will be conducted in English, with translation in Arabic.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Immigration Requirements**

Qatar grants tourist visas at border points for the nationals of 33<sup>1</sup> countries, besides the nationals of the GCC countries. Visit visas for the residents of the GCC countries and their companions are issued at border points, while entry visas for businessmen coming from places other than the countries mentioned above need to be arranged beforehand. Participants should contact relevant Qatar embassies or consulates on visa requirements, and obtain the appropriate entry permit where necessary as early as possible.

The official notification letter is generally sufficient to be used as supporting documentation for visa (entry permit) request. Please contact the local organizing partner, should there be any issues with obtaining visa for the purpose of attending this event.

**Money**

Qatar's official currency is the Qatari Riyal; 1 US dollar is equal to about 3.64 Qatari Riyals. Most major international Credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American

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<sup>1</sup> The 33 countries are: the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Finland, Spain, Monaco, the Vatican, Iceland, Andorra, San Marino, Lichtenstein, Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and South Korea.

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Express are widely accepted and ATMs are readily available. Bank hours are 7:30 am – 1:30 pm Sunday to Thursday with some branches open all day in shopping centres.

There will be banking and foreign exchange facilities at the QNCC and selected major hotels that will operate during conference opening hours.

**Hotel**

Please refer to the website <http://www.qsa.gov.qa/un-ggim/> for the list of selected hotels.

**Food**

**A GUIDE TO FOOD IN DOHA**

<b>Restaurants</b>	<b>Restaurants</b>
Al Dana (French, Mediterranean, and Asian cuisine) the Sharq Village and Spa, Khulaifat Tel:4425 6666	Mamig (Armenian) Katara Tel: 4408 0800
Al Shaheen(Traditional Lebanese cuisine à la carte or set menu) the Sheraton Hotel, West Bay Tel: 4485	Sukar Pasha Ottoman Lounge (Turkish) Katara Tel: 4408 2000
Asian Live.( Asian Fusion cuisine) Located at the Marriott Hotel, Airport area. Tel: 4429 8404	Al Adhamiyah Iraqi (Iraqi ) Souq Waqif. Tel: 4432 4326
Grill (Steak) Radisson Blu Hotel Doha, Ramada Junction, Salwa Road. Tel: 4428 1305	Al Maharah(Seafood) Souq Waqif Tel: 4441 5959
Isaan (Southeast Asian) Grand Hyatt Hotel, West Bay Lagoon. Tel: 4448 1234	Al Tawash(Qatari, Arabic) Souq Waqif. Tel: 4498 2002
The Fish Market (Seafood) Intercontinental Hotel, West Bay Lagoon. Tel: 4484 4444	An Italian Affair (Italian) Oasis Hotel, Souq Waqif Tel: 4442 4424
Ipanema(.Brazilian) Renaissance Doha City Centre Hotel, West Bay. Tel: 4419 6100	Zaatar W Zeit (Lebanese) Souk Waqif
Khan Farouk Tarab Café( Egyptian) Katara. Tel: 4408 0840	The Noodle House(Singaporean) Ground floor City Centre Mall

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**Transportation**

**Arrival at Doha International Airport**

Many hotels in Doha offer transportation from the Doha International Airport to hotel. We advise participants to contact their selected hotel in advance to arrange airport transfer. The hotel buses are parked beside the car park in front of the Arrivals terminal building. For more information, passengers can contact the airport representative at the respective hotel booth near the exit.

**LOCAL TRANSPORTATION**

**Shuttle bus service**

Shuttle bus services shall be provided between all selected hotels on the website <http://www.qsa.gov.qa/un-ggim/> and the Qatar National Convention Centre.

**Public transportation**

The Karwa Public Service Vehicles, operated by the government under the Mowasalat Company, is a world-recognized brand in the public transport industry most known for integrated transport solutions to daily commuters. The public bus system covers most areas of the city, and there are stops throughout most areas. The main bus station is located in the Souqs area of downtown Doha, and services operate to all major towns in Qatar.

Karwa Taxis are the most convenient and flexible mode of transport in Doha. The minimum fare for airport taxi starts at 25 QAR, and charge per kilometer is as low QAR 1.20 . For regular taxis the minimum fare is QAR 10 and charge per kilometer (After 5.5 km) is QAR 1.20. For booking through Mowasalat call center please contact +974 44588888, for airport to hotel bookings please contact the counter at Arrivals Terminal on +974 44626858 .

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**Business hours**

Qatar local time is 3 hours ahead of GMT. The working week runs from Sunday to Thursday, with Friday and Saturday being days off. Government ministries' working hours are from 7am – 2pm, Sunday to Thursday.

Malls in Doha tend to be open all day between 10am and 10pm, smaller shop times vary, but are generally 8.30am – 12.30pm and 4pm – 9pm. Some shops do not open at all on Fridays, while others open for a few hours early in the morning and reopen in the late afternoon, most malls and shopping centres only open around 4pm on this day.

For the time difference between Doha and your country, please refer to <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock>

**Dress**

In public, you will see most forms of Western and Arabic dress in this cosmopolitan country. Qataris however value modest dress and, to avoid offence, visitors are asked to follow a few basic guidelines. For men and women modest dress is advised. Shorts and skirts should be below the knee and shirts, tops and T-shirts should cover the shoulders and upper arms. Swimwear is acceptable at hotel beaches and swimming pools but visitors are asked to dress appropriately while in public areas.

The weather is cool during the winter months, so it may be advisable to bring some warmer clothing for chilly evenings and aggressively air-conditioned malls.

**Culture**

Qatar has an open-minded attitude to the world, but some forms of behaviour considered normal in the West may be frowned upon. Out of respect for residents, public displays of affection are considered inappropriate. Men should not approach traditionally dressed Qatari women for cultural reasons. Qatar has a low crime rate but should you need to contact the emergency services please dial 999.

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**Photography**

Picturesque Doha and the surrounding country have countless wonderful opportunities to take pictures, from the futuristic skyline of the city centre and the Corniche to the majestic sand dunes and mangroves a short drive from the city. However, there are some areas where it is inappropriate and in some cases illegal to take pictures. Out of respect, Qatari families should not be photographed without their permission. Permission should be sought before taking photographs of Government and military buildings, members of the military and police. If you are unsure whether it is appropriate to take a photograph, always ask.

**Alcohol and Drugs**

In Qatar alcoholic drinks can be bought with or without food in hotel bars and restaurants. Outside these venues, however, alcohol can be bought only with a resident's permit from a limited number of outlets. If you bring alcohol into the country, you can request a receipt from the airport, where it will be stored until your departure. As in all societies, there is a zero-tolerance policy on drink driving and drugs.

**Phones**

The two mobile phone providers for Qatar are QTEL and Vodafone. You can buy a prepaid SIM card from the airport or from any of their stores for around 50QR by completing a registration form and presenting your passport. This should allow you to call internationally. Alternatively, travelers with international roaming may connect via these service providers for calls and text messages. The country code for Qatar is 974.

**Water and electricity**

Tap water is safe to drink in Qatar and exceeds World Health Organisation standards. Many people choose to drink bottled water; however this is both unnecessary and bad for the environment.

Electrical sockets in Qatar are Type G British BS-1363 – the same as those used in Britain with three square pins and 240 Volts.

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**Climate**

Qatar is an arid country characterised by its hot humid summers and mild winters. Summer temperatures can rise to 50°C and winter temperatures can vary between 7 °C and 24 °C.

To check for current weather condition in Doha, please refer to <http://www.weather.com/weather/right-now/QAXX0003:1>

**Confirmation of return flights**

Please contact the airline directly to reconfirm your flight.

**Emergency number**

The emergency number is **999** for all services.

We would appreciate any comments or suggestions that you have on how to improve this information note.