



National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce الغرفة التجارية العربية الأمريكية الوطنية

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OMAN BUSINESS ROAD SHOW VISITS CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Hub of the Heartland Showcases Transportation Solutions and Iconic Tourism Developments

***Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood,
and Alderman Edward Burke Welcome Omani Delegation to the "Windy City"***

The Oman Business Road Show has just completed its second stop in the United States – in Chicago, Illinois – hometown of U.S. President Barack Obama. The focus of the visit to "The Windy City" was on tourism and transportation, with a special emphasis on rail networks, for which Chicago serves as a hub for the nation. Illinois also showcased the largest inland port in the United States, which may serve as a model for a comparable port that Oman is constructing in the Barka region.



Leading the commercial Road Show is H.E. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Oman's Minister of Commerce and Industry, who is joined by Oman's Ambassador to the United States – Her Excellency Hunaina Al-Mughairy – and the U.S. Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, the Honorable Greta C. Holtz. The delegation is

The Oman Business Road Show delegation to the United States 2013. Front row (left to right): Abdul Razzaq Ali Issa, CEO, Bank Muscat; Hon. Greta Holtz, U.S. Ambassador to Oman; H.E. Hunaina Al Mughairy, Oman's Ambassador to the U.S.; H.E. Ali Al Sunaidy, Oman's Minister of Commerce & Industry; Hon. Ray LaHood, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation; David Hamod, President & CEO, National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce.



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Hon. Ray LaHood, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation: "You have a great vision that will pay huge dividends."

composed of more than 40 business leaders, representing many of the top companies in Oman, as well as a handful of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The Road Show is being organized by the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce.

In honor of Chicago's unparalleled role as a transportation hub, the Honorable Ray LaHood, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation and former Member of the U.S. Congress, expressed his appreciation to the Omanis for bringing the Road Show to Illinois. "You are visiting the most transportation-centric city in the world," he said, "with 125 transit stations and multi-modal connections to places all over the globe. Oman would do well to consider Chicago as a model, with our infrastructure and economic corridors that create jobs

and serve to attract young, smart people from all over."

"You have a great vision that will pay huge dividends," Secretary LaHood noted, "and if you stay on track, His Majesty's vision will generate more opportunities than you ever dreamed possible."

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In his words of welcome to the Omani delegation, the Honorable Rahm Emanuel, Mayor of Chicago, stated, "On behalf of the City of Chicago, I offer my warmest greetings to you and all those gathered for the Oman Road Show This high-level trade and investment road show offers a unique opportunity for business and government leaders from the Sultanate of Oman to showcase themselves as an investment destination while demonstrating the benefits of the U.S. - Oman Free Trade Agreement."

Mayor Emanuel concluded, "Chicago's place as an international hub, coupled with its vast experience in transportation, tourism, healthcare and manufacturing, positions this road show to propel more involved collaborations between our countries."



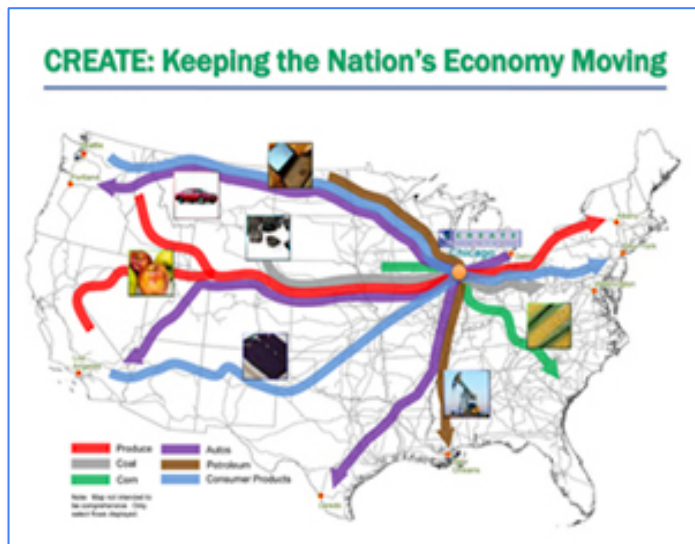
Hon. Edward Burke, Dean of the Chicago City Council, welcomes H.E. Ali Al Sunaidy, delegation leader and Oman's Minister of Commerce & Industry.



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Delegates visited the world-class Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and were briefed on public / private partnerships, operations, infrastructure development, and running world- class rail systems. Pictured (left to right): Khalid Al Shuaibi, Director General, Ministry of Commerce & Industry; Ziyad Al Zubair, Al Zubair Companies; Adrian Guerrero, Union Pacific Railroad; Dave Nelson, Chicago Transportation Coordination Office, Jeffrey Sriver, City of Chicago Department of Transportation, and Bill Thompson, CREATE.



The Chicago Regional Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (C.R.E.A.T.E.)

Mayor Emanuel's remarks lent great credence to the view expressed by H.E. Ali Al Sunaidy, Oman's Minister of Commerce & Industry. In explaining the Road Show's attraction to the Windy City, Minister Al Sunaidy stated, "We did not choose Chicago; Chicago chose us."

Minister Al Sunaidy noted that "for purposes of today's gathering, there were two important developments in the year 1833." First, he noted, the town of Chicago was incorporated with around 350 residents. Second, he suggested, "The Sultanate of Oman and the young United States signed a Treaty of Amity and Commerce, America's first treaty of its kind in the Arab world."

From the very beginning, Minister Al Sunaidy said, Chicago was designed to be a crossroads, staking its claim as America's transportation hub. "Chicago's preeminent role as a crossroads is the main reason why our delegation chose to visit your city," he continued. "Like you, Oman has been a trading crossroads for a very long time. And today, as Oman defines its vision to serve as a global hub, we look to Chicago for experience, expertise, and technology. Based on what I have already seen during our site visits here, Oman made an excellent choice in choosing Chicago as a partner."



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The feeling was apparently mutual. Alderman Edward Burke, Dean of the Chicago City Council and Chairman of Chicago's powerful Committee on Finance, formally welcomed the Omani delegation to the Windy City. "A stable, thriving economy requires education and equality," he said, and "I applaud H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said for having the wisdom to mandate free and equal education for all Omanis, regardless of race, gender or religion." This commitment, he noted, will "come to represent the bedrock of your national identity. In a region known for turmoil, this is what will set you apart; education is what will define your future."



Delegates visited Centerpoint Intermodal Center, the largest master-planned inland port in North America.

According to Alderman Burke, Chicago ranks fourth on the global power index, after Tokyo, New York, and London. Illinois ranks 10th among the 50 states in exports and imports to the Middle East, he pointed out, and Illinois exports to the Middle East totaled more than \$1.4 billion in 2012, an 81 percent increase since 2009.



Wabtec Corporation manufactures a broad range of products for locomotives, freight cars, and passenger vehicles.

Alderman Burke continued, "When Oman seeks our expertise and our foreign direct investment, it says that Oman is seeking talent, and Illinois is where they have found it." Omanis will "not only build their economy and their industry," he suggested. Oman will also "open up new markets for our goods, creating new supply chains. Global commerce, free trade, and investment are the most critical parts of any high-growth strategy, and I look forward to what the future holds for both Oman and our ever-changing Chicago."



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Thanks to NUSACC's strong partnerships in Chicago, the schedule in that city was jam-packed, with daily meetings from 7:00 in the morning to very late at night. Local partners included the [Arab-American Business & Professional Association](#), the [International Trade Association of Greater Chicago](#), the [Mayor's Office of Protocol](#), the [U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce](#), and [World Trade Illinois](#). Sponsors included one Nationwide Sponsor, [Occidental Petroleum Corporation](#), as well as two local "Gold" sponsors: [Lockheed Martin](#) and [Motorola Solutions](#).

On the first morning, delegates received a briefing from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), which included presentations on best practices, public/private partnerships, operations, infrastructure development, and running world-class rail systems. Presenters included Tom Murtha, Senior Planner at CMAP, Dave Nelson, General Manager of the Chicago Transportation Coordination Office, and Jeffrey Sriver, the City of Chicago's Director of Transportation Planning and Services. Omani delegates also met with Adrian Guerrero, Director of Corporate Relations at Union Pacific Railway, North America's largest Class 1 railway -- a company with 45,700 employees and a proud 150-year history.



Omani delegates enjoy a bird's-eye view of the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Planners highlighted the C.R.E.A.T.E. Program – the Chicago Region Environmental And Transportation Efficiency Program – as a model of public/private partnership. This \$3.8 billion program – composed of partners from the U.S. Government, state & local governments, and freight and passenger carriers – is substantially improving transportation flow through Chicago, according to William Thompson, Program Director.

This is vital in a city like Chicago, which serves as a transportation hub for the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Chicago receives more than 1.34 million loaded railcars per year, more than double the number received by the second busiest East – West freight rail gateway, St. Louis. Chicago is the seventh largest global container port in the world and number one in the United States, with 12.85 million TEUs (2010 data). There are more than 2,800 miles of railroad track in Chicago alone, carrying 37,000 loads of freight in and out of



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the city daily and supported by an average of more than 20,000 truck moves (i.e.- containers) every day.



Oman Road Show delegates were treated to a VIP tour of the Chicago Board of Trade / Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Omani delegates interested in transportation also had an opportunity to connect with some of the Chicago area's leading multimodal and economic development facilities:

- Centerpoint Intermodal Center – This is the largest master-planned inland port in North America, covering more than 6,500 acres. It is strategically situated next to major Interstates and supported by a Logistics Park (BNSF) and an Intermodal Terminal (Union Pacific).
- Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) – John Greuling, President & CEO, provided an in-depth presentation to the Omani delegates. According to *Site Selection* magazine, CED is one of the top 20 economic development organizations in the United States, specializing in identifying targeted industries that benefit from Chicago's comparative advantage as a transportation hub.
- Wabtec Corporation – Omani delegates toured a subsidiary of this global rail product manufacturer and service provider. Their visit to the Cardwell Westinghouse plant enabled delegates to see firsthand Wabtec's manufacturing capabilities for a broad range



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of products for locomotives, freight cars, and passenger vehicles for original equipment and aftermarket usage.

In addition to serving as a hub for transportation, this major Midwestern city is home to a global marketplace in the form of the Chicago Board of Trade / Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The CME Group is the world's leading and most diverse derivatives marketplace, handling 3 billion contracts worth approximately \$1 quadrillion annually. The company provides a marketplace for buyers and sellers, bringing together individuals, companies, and institutions that need to manage risk or that want to profit by accepting risk.

The CME Group's exchanges -- CME, CBOT, NYMEX and COMEX -- offer the widest range of global benchmark products across all major asset classes, including futures and options based on interest rates, equity indexes, foreign exchange, energy, agricultural commodities, metals, weather, and real estate.

Oman Road Show delegates were treated to a VIP tour of the Chicago Board of Trade / Chicago Mercantile Exchange, where they witnessed billions of dollars worth of trades in foreign exchange, energy, and agricultural commodities from all over the globe.



Millennium Park is home to the iconic "Cloud Gate" -- affectionately known as "The Bean" in Chicago. It is a 110-ton elliptical sculpture forged of reflective, highly polished stainless steel.



Chicago is one of America's top three tourism cities, attracting more than 46 million tourists last year. Also in 2012, the State of Illinois received more than 100 million tourists for the first time ever, registering an 11 percent increase in tourism volume. Says Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, "These record-breaking numbers show that the economic engine

H.E. Ali Al Sunaidy, Minister of Commerce & Industry: "Like Chicago, Oman has been a trading crossroads for a very long time."



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of tourism in Illinois is firing on all cylinders.”

Two Gulf-based airlines offer daily service to Chicago: [Etihad Airways](#) began service in Chicago in 2009, and [Qatar Airways](#) began service to that city earlier this year. Chicago is America’s third largest city, with 2.7 million residents. In addition to serving a large population base – including an Arab-American community in Illinois that is estimated to be in the range of 250,000 – these flights also move large quantities of cargo from America’s heartland to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Capitalizing on growing ties between Illinois and Oman, the delegation met with officials at Chicago's premier tourism promotion agency, "Choose Chicago." Mayor Rahm Emanuel has set a goal of attracting 50 million visitors a year by 2020, with a particular focus on international visitors. "Increasing Chicago’s share of international travel to the United States is an achievable goal and will drive significant economic benefits for the city,” said Don Welsh, President and CEO of Choose Chicago.

Over a long weekend in Chicago, the Omani delegates took full advantage of tourism opportunities. They were given a VIP tour of Willis Tower, formerly Sears Tower, which was the tallest building in the world for nearly a quarter-century, beginning in 1973. This included a visit to "The Ledge," a glass balcony that extends outside the 103rd floor of Willis Tower, offering a view of four states. Delegates also visited Millennium Park, one of the world’s most visited and innovative urban parks, featuring the iconic “Cloud Gate” – a 110-ton elliptical sculpture forged of reflective, highly polished stainless steel – and affectionately known in Chicago as “The Bean.”



Panel 1 during the Business Briefing focused on investing locally while having global access. Pictured (right to left): Abdulrahman Al Hatmi, Omani Ministry of Transport and Communications; Jamal Aziz, Sohar Freezone; H.E. Hunaina Al Mughairy, Oman's Ambassador; and David Hamod, NUSACC President & CEO.

Delegates paid a visit to Navy Pier, Chicago’s top tourist attraction, a former railroad depot that was converted into a high-end waterfront development. In addition, tourism delegates on the



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Road Show made a “road trip” to Six Flags, where they held high-level meetings with the world’s largest regional theme park company, with \$1.1 billion in revenue last year and 18 parks situated across North America. Some delegates even squeezed in a basketball game at the United Center, where the world-famous Chicago Bulls defeated the Denver Nuggets.

* * *



U.S. Ambassador to Oman, Hon. Greta Holtz (left), and Omani Ambassador to the U.S., H.E. Hunaina Al Mughairy (right), enjoy a quiet moment before lunch.

On the final night in Chicago, H.E. Minister Al Sunaidy was hosted for dinner by The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, one of the oldest and most prominent international affairs organizations in the United States. The private dinner for 40 CEOs and thought leaders provided an opportunity for H.E. the Minister to hold a more in-depth discussion about the Oman – U.S. relationship in all its parts.

Rachel Bronson, Vice President of Studies at The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, noted, “The Chicago Council was delighted to host H.E. Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Oman’s

Minister of Commerce and Industry, as well as Ambassadors Hunaina Al-Mughairy and Greta Holtz. This was a terrific conversation about Oman’s economic plans and ways in which Chicago leaders could partner for mutual growth.”

Ms. Bronson’s remarks echoed those of the Honorable Ray LaHood, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation and former Member of the U.S. Congress. He said, “I was pleased to participate in an extraordinary high-level meeting and discussion in Chicago among business, civic, and political leaders from Oman and their counterparts from the United States. The presence of the U.S. Ambassador and the Omani Ambassador, on top of the presence of H.E. the Minister of Commerce, enabled serious and substantial conversations that will prove very beneficial for both countries well beyond the conference and for many years to come.”

For more information about the Oman Business Road Show, click on:

www.OmanRoadShow.com