



WHY OPENING QATAR'S BORDERS IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

RAPHAEL NAGEL, FOUNDER OF THE ABRAHAMIC BUSINESS CIRCLE, LOOKS AT THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE ALULA ACCORD

T **THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THIS** week's re-opening of borders between the Gulf nations and Qatar will lead to a renewed surge in business across the region.

The reopening with Qatar is an outstanding development at the right time and it shows the amazing vision and tolerance of the rulers of the region and how they're able to see beyond political issues for the benefit of the greater good. It's a clear signal for economic diplomacy and a chance to stabilise the post-Covid economy.



“MOVING FORWARD, IT COULD BE THE START OF A MORE PEACEFUL ERA TOO, PAVING THE WAY FOR BETTER RELATIONS”

A lot of business has always been done between Dubai, Qatar and the rest of the world. Many of my clients would fly from Dubai to Qatar for dinner and come back the same evening so there has always been a huge link between the UAE and Qatar’s business communities.

Before the borders closed, around 10 percent of Dubai’s tourists were Qatari, so not least in the wake of a devastating pandemic which has hit the tourism industry hard, this is set to grow significantly.

The World Cup in 2022 is going to be an extension of this and in turn, it will benefit Dubai and the UAE. Firstly, the event will attract huge numbers of tourists to Qatar but as one of the logistics hubs of the world, will also benefit Dubai and the UAE. The collateral benefit means people will come here before or after the World Cup as either a stopover or connecting destination.

Qatar is very small but very wealthy, so there is still a lot of demand for a lot of products and services, for example, there was a moment when Qatar was giving incentives to companies just to come and set up in Qatar.



↑ **GCC united** Business leaders in the Middle East have hailed the AIUla accord as a positive step for the region

The other businesses to benefit will be trading, from food to essential items. I also believe that there will be new logistics projects. Covid was a hard time for the logistics sector so having a reopening with Qatar will offer new plannings so, for example, the airlines of the region - Etihad, Emirates and Qatar - can operate more jointly, saving costs and allow more collaboration to take place to help make up for the aviation losses of 2020.

“IT WILL BE AN OUTSTANDING FUTURE FOR THE REGION”



2.5%

The projected growth of the Gulf region's economies this year, according to the IMF

The UAE has had a very unusual innovative healthcare policy which has shown incredible results. Compared to European countries, it’s become a model for the world. Many Europeans wish to be here, where we have maintained a much better quality of life in spite of the pandemic.

It’s certainly made it very attractive to investors and the reopening is a clear sign that we are getting closer towards a common market. We’ve seen the challenges and opportunities from Europe’s common market so we can learn from that and improve.

Moving forward, it could be the start of a more peaceful era too, paving the way for better relations with the likes of Israel. This is a new and more positive era. We are already having applications to the Abrahamic Business Circle to join us, seeing the benefits of this time in which we are moving towards greater collaboration and strength as a common market.

The future now depends on economic diplomacy. If we can solve these relationships, it will be an outstanding future for the region. **CEO**