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UAE: 44 years of peace and continuing development

Ambassador Al Shamsi is keen to build on UAE and Ireland's friendship

THERE are numerous opportunities for economic cooperation between UAE and Ireland in many sectors including renewable energy, IT, agri-food, and tourism. There are huge business opportunities for Irish companies looking to start, expand or relocate in the UAE Free Zones areas. The benefits for establishing businesses there are enormous such as tax exemptions, repatriation of capital and profits, corporate tax exemptions, and there is no tax on personal income.

Companies operating in the UAE, whether national, international or multi-national, find all the support and facilities they need. The UAE has enacted business laws to attract investors, it established competent and resourceful administration, and the infrastructure and telecommunications facilities are of the highest international standard.

Dubai Ports World has a very strong portfolio in supporting international businesses. All year round, the UAE attracts companies and commercial entities from all over the world to specialised international exhibitions and trade fairs.

Recent trade figures show that in the period from April 2013 to March 2014 Ireland exports to the UAE reached €280million while imports reached to about €17million, and from April 2014 to March 2015 Ireland exports to the UAE reached to about €368million and imports reached €31million. There is about 24% increase in Irish exports last year, and an increase of 45% in imports from UAE.

UAE Embassy in Ireland

On 25 March 2015, HE Dr Saeed Mohammed Alshamsi, presented his credentials to President Michael D Higgins as the UAE ambassador and plenipotentiary to Ireland.

The Embassy would exert all necessary efforts in the years ahead to encourage trade missions between the two countries with an aim of identifying potential business opportunities and boosting future economic relations. The thriving economy of the UAE and the recent strong performance of the Irish economy would undoubtedly play significant roles in this regard.

UAE-Ireland bilateral relationship

The UAE set peace, security, development, respect and solidarity as the main principles to build up as solid relationship with other countries and nations, in this contest, the UAE has started its bilateral relationship with Ireland in 1974, following the growing of Irish community in the UAE, and the rise of the number of Emiratis student in Ireland and the increase in the trade exchange between the two countries, the UAE decided to open an Embassy in Ireland in February 2010 after one year of the



Ceremony: HE Ambassador Al Shamsi presents his credentials to President Higgins. Also pictured: DFA secretary-general Niall Burgess, Minister of State Aodhán O'Riordan, and the ambassador's family

opening of the Irish Embassy in Abu Dhabi in October 2009.

As bilateral relationship is based on common understanding, mutual respect and a will of deepening cooperation and development, UAE and Ireland have developed their solid relations over many years in many sectors varying from economic co-operation to education, health, sport, and mainly their common understanding for an open and tolerant world which fights terrorism and promote peace, stability, justice and prosperity for the whole world.

Education

Education is a top government priority and developing human capital is considered a key enabler in efforts to establish a diversified knowledge-based economy. Ireland is considered as a growing destination for Emirati students who follow their higher education in Irish universities mainly in the prestigious Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, where the number of Emirati students is considerably growing and has now reached 160. A considerable number of Irish teachers are working in UAE schools.

Health

The UAE has a highly developed health service, including sophisticated and well-equipped hospitals, specialised clinics and primary care centres. Healthcare in the UAE is provided in over 70 public and private hospitals, over 150 healthcare centres and clinics focus on primary care.

This health infrastructure stands in

stark contrast to the seven hospitals and 12 health centres that were in place when the UAE federation was established in 1971.

The UAE Ministry of Health oversees implementation of government policy in relation to the provision of comprehensive health care for all UAE citizens and residents. UAE nationals are covered by free health insurance schemes and sponsors are required to provide health insurance for all employees and their dependants.

Health Authority - Abu Dhabi (HAAD) introduced mandatory health care for all workers in 2006. By 2013, the Abu Dhabi health insurance system covered 2.73million people. Dubai Health Authority (DHA) has also implemented insurance schemes for nationals and residents.

As the population increases and healthcare demands burgeon, government strategies such as Emirates Vision 2021 are committed to continuing improvements in healthcare services throughout the emirates. Reducing the need for Emiratis to travel abroad for specialised treatment is a key driver in this area.

Due to the competence of Irish medical staff, health facilities are hiring an increasing number of Irish doctors and nurses.

Tourism and Aviation

Tourism has played a significant role in the success of economic diversification. During 2014 the UAE has continued to strengthen its position as a top tourist

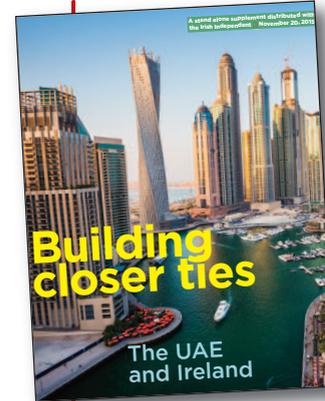
destination. The country's two world-class airlines, Etihad and Emirates, which operate on daily basis between Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Dublin, have played a major role in the success of the tourist industry and are key contributors to the economy. Dubai expects that the aviation industry will contribute 32% to its GDP by 2020.

Expo 2020

The year 2020 has further significance for Dubai as it will host the first ever World Expo to be held in the region. Expo 2020 expects to welcome 25 million visitors. As well as driving tourism, it will also create thousands of new jobs and enormous demand for new facilities, including housing, hotels, shopping malls and entertainment complexes.

Trade

The UAE foreign trade indices bounced back in 2013 to pre-global financial crisis levels. The Asia-Pacific region maintained its leading position among UAE's trade partners in terms of non-oil trade, accounting for 43% of total direct trade volume. Europe remained in second place, contributing 27% of total trade, followed by the MENA region with 14%. The US and the Caribbean ranked fourth with 10% of total non-oil trade, followed by West and Central Africa at 4% and East and South Africa at 3%. UAE plays an important role in connecting regional and international markets. The steady growth of most economic sectors within the country has led to an increase in foreign trade.



A supplement published with the Irish Independent November 23, 2015

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Credits

Published and produced by Justin Media International
Email: bredajustin@live.ie
Tel: (01) 5156271

Designed by gersgiggins@gmail.com



Style: McGettigan's bars are conquering the world, from left, the downstairs area in Dubai; the malt-room in Singapore, the bar in McGettigan's NYC in Manhattan

McGettigan's Group has big plans for 2016 expansion

McGettigan's bar has provided a real slice of Irish life for expats in Dubai since it opened in 2010. But chief executive **Dennis McGettigan** is now taking the idea to Qatar, Singapore, New York... and home

THE whole exciting story of Dubai can be summed up in Dennis McGettigan and the genesis of the successful bar that bears his name in the Jumeirah Towers district.

Just five years ago Dennis looked out the window of his office at the Bonnington Hotel.

"I would often look out that window and ask myself what I was going to do with the patch of sand we owned beyond the car park", he told the Irish Independent.

"I know", he said to himself one day, "I'll try a pub".

That type of can-do attitude goes far in the United Arab Emirates and McGettigan's Bar quickly became an important social hub for the many young Irish people that flocked to Dubai to live, work or holiday in the five years since.

"I decided I wouldn't do the diddly-eye thing because it doesn't represent what Ireland is today", says Dennis, CEO of the group. "I came up with the idea of McGettigan's, got it open, made sure the food was just right, the drink was just right, and there was lots of sport on TV at all times.

"I wanted music and entertainment to be a fundamental part of McGettigan's and I decided we would bring Irish acts over at least once a month and from the beginning we worked on bringing some of the best names in Irish music and entertainment to the McGettigan's stage."

Since then the venue has played host to many top Irish acts including Paul Brady, Damien Dempsey, The Coronas, Mary Black, Paddy Casey, Mundy and Aslan, most return-

ing time after time.

Comedians Jason Byrne, PJ Gallagher and Dave McSavage have also performed.

The original McGettigan's pub in Dublin city centre was opened in 1964 by company founder Jim McGettigan in 1964, but the company has gone from strength to strength since the Dubai premises was opened. There are now five thriving venues throughout the UAE, with three in Dubai and one each in Abu Dhabi and Fujairah. Three additional venues are scheduled to open in as yet undisclosed locations in Dubai, downtown Abu Dhabi and Al Ain by the end of 2016.

Demand is high for McGettigan's bars to open in other areas of the GCC region — with frequent requests from loyal McGettigan's customers and expats living in the region.

Plans are already well underway to open outlets next year at prime locations in Bahrain and Doha, Qatar.

Other venues are also planned, with a first venture into the UK next March when they



Visionaries: Company founder Jim McGettigan (left), with Group CEO Dennis McGettigan



Comfort: McGettigan's NYC in Midtown Manhattan opened with a Coronas gig

take over Brogan's, an existing Irish bar in the upmarket London area of Fulham Broadway.

The property will close for refurbishment and reopen as McGettigan's. The impressive 9,000sq ft venue will have a number of features that have become synonymous with McGettigan's bars around the world including the Log Room and Library area. Additional UK venues are planned for Birmingham and Glasgow in Scotland before the end of 2016.

The UK expansion follows another first step for McGettigan's — to the United States. This took place in June this year with the opening of a venue in the heart of New York City.

McGettigan's NYC debuted with a festive private preview event on Thursday, June 4th. The opening night featured a ribbon cutting officiated by the McGettigan family and a live performance by one of Ireland's top bands, The Coronas who entertained the almost 400 party-goers in attendance. The bar is located at 70 West 36th St in Midtown Manhattan.

Further expansion on the east coast of

America is imminent for the McGettigan's Group with outlets planned for both Washington and Philadelphia in early 2017.

Home turf is also well looked after by the McGettigan's Group, following further expansion in the Summer 2015 when McGettigan's opened its doors in Galway City.

An existing two-storey building just off Eyre Square was remodeled and refurbished in a €2.5million investment in the venue.

Another highly-anticipated opening will take place early next month with the McGettigan family-owned Royal Hotel on the Main Street in Bray, Co Wicklow.

The McGettigan Hotel group recently acquired Gallagher's Hotel in the centre of Letterkenny, Co Donegal where they also own the increasingly popular Clanree Hotel, Conference & Leisure Centre. Gallagher's is where the group will launch a new nightlife concept entitled Warehouse by McGettigan's.

Warehouse is founded on the same principles as McGettigan's — The Modern Irish Experience. It will embrace the same values and high standards of food, service, live entertainment, sports coverage and atmosphere but will have a very different look and feel. Warehouse will be younger and edgier with a more industrial-styled interior and is designed to attract a different clientele to its sister bar at The Clanree.

The newly refurbished Clanree Hotel was recently awarded four-star status and the group is aiming to achieve the same status at The Royal Hotel in Bray and The Limerick City Hotel (formerly Jury's) with full scale upgrades planned at both properties in 2016.

You can enjoy the experience of a great McGettigan's night out in

- Letterkenny
- Limerick
- Galway
- Dubai (3)
- Abu Dhabi
- Fujairah
- Singapore
- New York

And from 4 December in

- Bray, Co Wicklow

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The Irish Village in Dubai — celebrating 19 years of success

SINCE its opening in October 1996, The Irish Village has always been looked upon as a small piece of Ireland in the heart of Dubai. Designed in the form of a typical Irish village street, its authenticity comes from the use of Irish materials, such as Liscannor stone, and craftsmanship used in its construction, all of which have been imported from the Emerald Isle.

Employing over 24 Irish staff and serving traditional Irish food, The Irish Village is part of Dubai Duty Free's Leisure Division and has great support from Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice-Chairman and George Horan, President. In fact, The Irish village concept was Colm's brainchild and the street façade includes the Ballinasloe Post Office, a nod to his birthplace.

Over the years The Irish Village has kick-started the annual St Patrick's Day celebrations in Dubai and over 100 Irish dancers, with ages ranging from



Lively: The Irish Village is a big part of the community and renowned for its entertainment and food

5-18, have performed to packed crowds. The venue is a big part of the Dubai community and is featured in many tourist guides as one of the "Best Attractions in

the Emirate" and was named "One of the world's great meeting places" by Newsweek magazine.

The Irish Village has won numerous awards for Concerts,

Food plus Best Pub in Dubai.

The Irish Village continues to play a big part in the Irish community and is a sponsor of both GAA (Dubai Celts) and the Dubai

Irish Society whose AGM is always held at the village. In recent years, the Donegal and Galway footballers and Tipperary senior hurlers have had events on our lawns. We also show the All-Ireland championship games live on our screens.

The annual Christmas Tree Lighting attracts over 1,000 people and last year the Irish Ambassador, Patrick Hennessy, conducted the tree lighting ceremony.

The Irish Village Shop was recently renovated and expanded and in addition to a wide range of Irish merchandise, now includes a range of Irish food products.

The season ahead sees more great events including several international artists, the return of Texas plus an amazing Irish show called 'Murphy's Legacy' - Irish Dance Reborn.

Keep your eyes and ears open for The Irish Village II — it's coming!



Play: Danú Dubai will stage Shadow of a Gunman



Film: Liam Neeson will narrate The Irish Rebellion

Commemorating 1916 Rising on stage and screen in UAE

THE Irish Embassy in the United Arab Emirates has drawn up a strong cultural programme to mark the centenary of the Easter Rising.

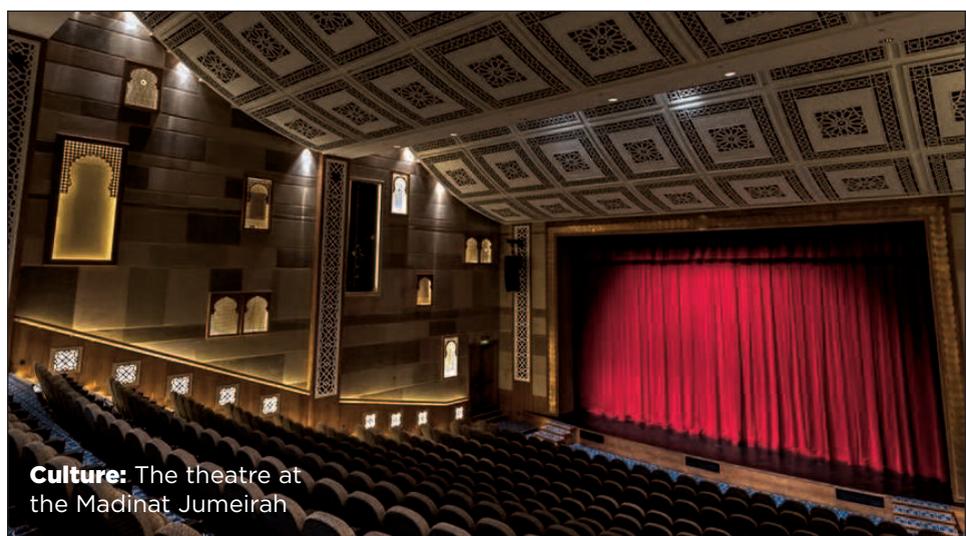
In partnership with the Dubai-based theatre group Danú, a series of events will be staged at The Madinat Theatre, at the Madinat Jumeirah in Dubai, on 22-23 April 2016.

The programme will consist of the powerful Seán O'Casey play Shadow of a Gunman along with Irish dancing, traditional Irish

music and singing. The event will also feature the poetry and last letters of the executed leaders of the 1916 Rising.

On March 16th, the Irish Embassy will also host a special screening of the cinema edit of The Irish Rebellion, narrated by Liam Neeson and designed by Annie Atkins, who won an Oscar for best production design for the film The Grand Budapest Hotel.

A longer three-part version of the documentary will be shown on RTE in 2016.



Culture: The theatre at the Madinat Jumeirah

Dubai Duty Free won't rest on its laurels as it looks to future success

Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice Chairman of Dubai Duty Free, outlines his company's plans for expansion with Expo on the horizon

IT HAS been another year of extraordinary success for Dubai Duty Free. The company has collected more than 500 awards since it was opened back in December 1983 by Irishman Colm McLoughlin. Now Executive Vice-chairman, Mr McLoughlin outlines some of the ways in which Dubai Duty Free's excellence has been recognised.

"Over the years, we have been recognised through many awards and accolades, and most recently, Dubai Duty Free was awarded with the Frontier Award for Best Marketing Campaign of the Year by a Retailer. This award recognised our broad-based marketing activities across the year which is closely linked to our record sales of \$1.917bn in 2014.

"The operation was also named the Best Airport in Duty Free Shopping presented at the Business Traveller Middle East Awards, Middle East Travel Retailer of the Year from DFNI Asia Pacific, and the Superbrands Awards for Excellence in Branding received from Superbrands Council UAE."

But DDF isn't resting on its laurels, and the continuing development of Dubai International Airport will help it to grow further.

"The opening of Concourse D in early 2016 will be a major development for Dubai Duty Free", explains Mr McLoughlin. "DDF will have a total retail area of 7,000sq m in the new space, this new concourse will cater to all the non-Emirates flights, with a capacity to handle 18 million passengers annually. The opening of the new concourse will definitely cater well to the growing passenger numbers and further drive Dubai Duty Free's sales.

"Concourse D is designed around a central atrium, as opposed to the long linear structures of the nearby concourses. The overall

design is very bright and spacious with some interesting architectural features.

"There is 'open gate' boarding for passengers so traditional holding areas will not exist and passengers can board flights directly from the gate.

"The Dubai Duty Free offer is within the central atrium, along with the food and beverage outlets, making it a very vibrant and dynamic environment that is easily accessible for all passengers. The furthest gate is only a ten minute walk away."

The opening of a second major international airport at Jebel-Ali, 23km south-west of Dubai, has helped boost DDF further. In 2010 Al Maktoum International opened in Dubai World Central, now known as Dubai South.



Winners: Colm McLoughlin presents the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open trophy to Søren Kjeldsen at Royal County Down



Honoured: President of the Dubai Department of Civil Aviation HH Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum presents the Frontier Award for Best Marketing Campaign of the Year by a Retailer to Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice-Chairman of DDF

"The longer-term development plans for Al Maktoum International (AMI) are very impressive. At the moment in the current terminal, Dubai Duty Free operates a retail area of 2,500sq m and with the increase in the number of passengers and airlines using AMI, the sales are growing very well.

"AMI will continue to grow and discussions are on with the airport company about the infrastructure. There will be four hubs with space for 30million passengers and we will be servicing the duty free spaces there.

"We are growing all the time from the point of passengers using the airports we will have to do two things: increase sale per head - we have been doing that for 32 years - and, secondly, to sell to more people.

"In the mid-term, by around 2020, AMI will have a capacity for over 160 million passengers and ultimately, our retail operation will cover some 80,000sq m. That is going to be huge."

Expo2020 is on the horizon, which will present another opportunity.

"The fact that Expo 2020 will attract an additional 25 million passengers in its six months span is very exciting for all of us," says Galway-born Mr McLoughlin. "For Dubai Duty Free in particular it means that we will have the opportunity to attract more customers passing through the two airports.

"The Expo2020 site is located close to AMI in Dubai South, so great emphasis will be placed on the development there and the plans are very impressive. AMI itself will be well-advanced in its development plans, as

well our retail operation, and Dubai International will be as busy as ever. Growth will be visible everywhere and the business at the airport will reflect that advancement."

The world's best golfer has linked up with DDF this year, with the company sponsoring the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open hosted by the Rory Foundation. Mr McLoughlin has been impressed by the golfer.

"Rory McIlroy is a remarkable young man. Even though he is just 26 years old, for me, he is already one of the finest sportsmen in my lifetime. We all know about him as a golfer. What he has achieved at such a young age winning four Majors already and I am sure there are many more to come - is amazing. But I am more impressed with the person that he is.

"In terms of the Irish Open, he spoke to me about the Rory Foundation and what they want to do, and it resonated a lot with the objectives we have at our Dubai Duty Free Foundation. You can see he wants to do a lot for his chosen causes and he is very mindful of his responsibilities as one of the leading sports stars in the world.

"The fact that the Rory Foundation will continue to host the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open until 2018 was central to our decision moving forward. We are pleased that the 2016 tournament will be staged at the K Club which has just undergone a major expansion."

DDF has other interests in Ireland too. "We have sponsored the Irish Derby, now the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby, since 2008 and we think that we have helped build up the event to be a great sporting and social festival as a result of our involvement. The end result for DDF is great brand exposure and a feel-good factor that we are involved with this historic race meeting. The media exposure is good and growing and that is important to us. We have agreed to continue with our sponsorship of the Irish Derby until 2017.

"The Dubai Duty Free Irish Open hosted by the Rory Foundation was our first foray into golf in Europe. The tournament has a tremendous history and is the flagship event in Ireland and attracts viewers around the world. After our terrific inaugural sponsorship year in Northern Ireland in May, we recently announced our title sponsorship until 2018, with an increase in prize money to €4million. The staging of the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open hosted by the Rory Foundation in 2016 at The K Club is another positive. We are looking forward to a great event next year.

DDF sponsors Dublin Arab film festival

THE Dublin Arabic Film Festival (DAFF) at the IFT has rapidly become an important event in Dublin's cultural calendar. The second running completed its run last week and was again a huge success.

Dubai Duty Free sponsors the festival, and Colm McLoughlin commented: "Through our sponsorship of the Dublin Arabic Film Festival, we have seen that film is a great medium that crosses cultural divides and creates greater understanding and awareness.

"With the help of Jim Sheridan, an Irish film director and Zhara Moufid, the Festival Director, I am sure that this festival will grow for many years to come."



Culture: Pictured at the launch of the Dublin Arabic Film Festival last year were RTÉ's Ryan Tubridy, director Jim Sheridan, actor Omar Sharif, Sinéad el-Sibai of sponsors Dubai Duty Free and the festival director Zhara Moufid



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THE BLUEPRINT



Stunning: The magnificent Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi. It can accommodate 41,000 worshippers under its 82 domes

Abu Dhabi - a fascinating destination

Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE and fast becoming a popular tourist destination for tourists – even more so since Etihad Airlines now flies there out of Dublin twice a day.

It is by far the biggest of the emirates, and with 621,000 residents the city is the second most populous after Dubai.

Being the seat of the president and the federal cabinet of the UAE, there is a bustling administration in the city which also hosts many international embassies, oil companies and multinational businesses.

According to Fortune magazine and

CNN, Abu Dhabi is the richest city in the world.

In Arabic, Abu Dhabi means Father of Deer, but there are few stags or does to be seen romping through this modern city with broad boulevards, tall office and apartment buildings, and busy shopping malls.

Good weather is guaranteed, but is best from October to May. It can get very hot (43°C plus) from June to September, when sandstorms can strike.

The oasis city of Al Ain, about 150km away, bordering Oman, regularly records the highest summer temperatures in the country, however

the dry desert air and cooler evenings make it a traditional retreat from the intense summer heat and year round humidity of the capital city.

If you have won the lotto for a few weeks running you may like to stay at the Emirates Palace, which offers a \$1million tailored holiday package.

The hotel was opened in 2005, and cost a reputed €5bn and several of its suites are furnished in gold and marble. The cost of a stay begins around €300 per night for the Coral Room, and the hotel set in over 100 hectares of landscaped gardens with a sumptuous 1.3km of exclusive beach.

In recent years many other hotels have opened to suit every pocket, and the Abu Dhabi tourist board (visitabudhabi.ae) will help you find your accommodation.

A visit to Abu Dhabi is incomplete without seeing the stunning Sheikh Zayed Mosque, which can accommodate 41,000 worshippers. Its skyline includes 82 domes and over 1,000 columns and the world's largest hand-knotted carpet.

The main prayer hall is dominated by one of the world's largest chandeliers – 10 metres in diameter, 15 metres in height and weighing 12 tonnes.

The mosque's first ceremony was the funeral of its namesake, Sheikh Zayed, who is buried at the site.

A good tip is to arrive around 4.30pm for the 'Sunset Tour' at 5pm and chill out in afternoon breeze.

Another excellent attraction is the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital is the world's largest, and most advanced, falcon hospital. Its highlight is a falcon display museum as well as a facility with free-flying falcons.

Other typical, if less mobile, creatures from this part of the world are on sale in Al Ain, at the last camel souk in the UAE, east of Jebel Hafet.

Breen working to remove obstacles to trade growth

The Oireachtas Foreign Affairs committee chairman pays tribute to those who have fostered good UAE-Ireland relations, writes **Alison Martin**

IRELAND established diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates back in 1974. And, according to TD Pat Breen, chairman of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, our ties have strengthened greatly in recent years due to better aviation links, trade visits, ministerial visits, and last year's trade mission by Taoiseach Enda Kenny.

"One would never have imagined ten or 15 years ago that we would have 25 direct flights a week to Abu Dhabi," Mr Breen notes. The Irish embassy was set up there in 2009 and is evidence of the 'special relationship' we have, helped by the Irish who have contributed to the success of the UAE economy.

Mr Breen says: "I am talking about a friend of mine Colm McLoughlin, who

along with other guys in Shannon Airport, left and set up Dubai Duty Free. It is now one of the most famous duty free stores in the Middle East.

"Then we have people like Gerald Lawless, president of the Jumeirah hotel group. These people have made a very valuable contribution to the strength of relations."

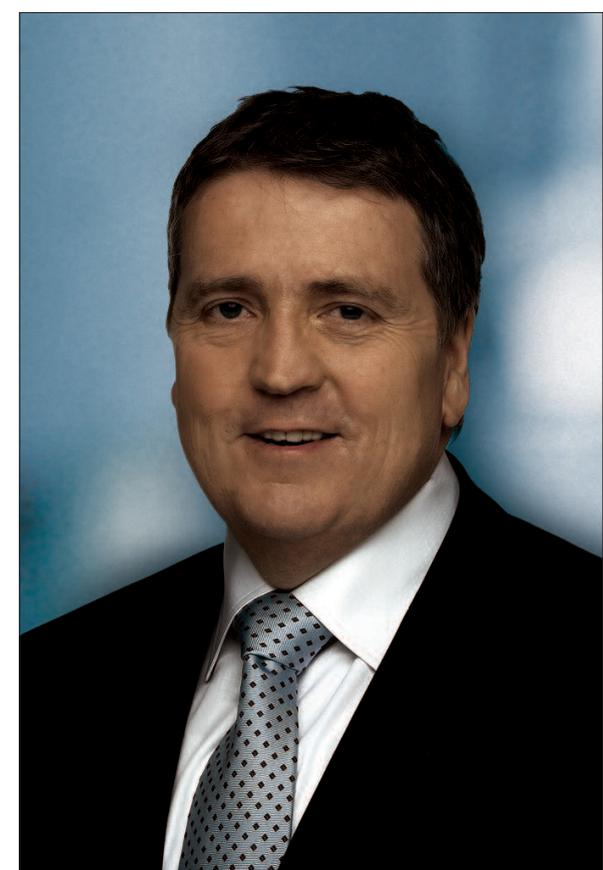
The United Arab Emirates is, according to Mr Breen, 'more liberal than the surrounding GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries, which makes it an ideal hub for Irish companies working in other Arab countries.

"There are about 70 companies, like Sisk, doing very well there," he adds. The new UAE Ambassador to Ireland, Dr Saeed Mohammed Al Shamsi, comes from a business background and is keen to develop trade further. According to the Arab-Irish Chamber

of Commerce, Irish merchandise exports to the Arab countries were up by 29 per cent, or €491million, to €2.2billion in the 12 months to end May 2015.

However, there are obstacles to potential further growth. Mr Breen has been campaigning for a review of the visa system; the UK has recently adopted a policy where you can be a tourist there for up to six months.

And if someone wants to come here from the UAE to do business, Mr Breen says it can be a "cumbersome" process, taking "a week or ten days or more" to get a visa. Having lobbied the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Justice, Mr Breen notes optimistically, however, that he hopes there "will be movement on the issue in the near future".



Campaigning: Pat Breen wants to change the cumbersome visa system for UAE



Action: The Middle East side takes on Canada at the GAA World Games (left)



Striking: The stylish Middle East GAA jersey designed by O'Neills



Beachy: The successful Dubai Celts hurling side

Bringing Gaels to the Gulf

THE biggest sporting event ever held for the Irish in UAE took place earlier this year in Abu Dhabi.

Twenty sides from eight countries all over the world took part in the first GAA Etihad World Games in March, with the Middle East 'B' side beating their own 'A' side in the men's final, while the Middle East women overcame the Australasian representatives.

An International World Cup, for eight teams with no Irish players, was staged as

part of the GAA World Games, with the Pat Spillane-coached Argentina (men) and Canada (women) winning the trophies while sides from Galicia, the Middle East and South Africa also took part.

It was a fantastic weekend, with plenty of talented footballers taking part. The final featured several with county experience, with the winners captained by Joe Melia (Meath) and featuring Peter Domican (Roscommon) who won a Connacht cham-

ampionship in 2010. The beaten finalists included Andreas Doyle (Wexford) and Cian Tobin (Kerry).

The 2016 event will be held in Dublin.

The Uachtarán of the GAA, Aogán Ó Fearghail, was a special guest and impressed all with his singing of Óró Sé do Bheath Abhaile at the banquet.

Gaelic Games in the Gulf are run by the Middle East GAA (www.middleeastgaa.com) which covers Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman,

Qatar and Kuwait. Within UAE there are clubs in Dubai (Celts), Abu Dhabi (Na Fianna) Al Ain (GAA) and Sharjah (Gaels, and Wanderers LGFC). Both sexes and all ages are catered for.

James Ryan, a player with Na Fianna in Abu Dhabi explained the attraction of playing GAA in the Arabian Gulf: "the GAA offers a sense of identity to the Irish living abroad. Ireland is never too far away as long as you have a football or a hurley."

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Winner of over 18 awards for Best Pub Food, Best Live Music, Best Live Music Concert, Best Live Venue, Best Pub, Favourite Bar, Favourite Pub Grub, Best Gig Under 3,000 capacity, Concert of the year and Favourite Concert!



Etihad and Ireland: the world's top airline is still growing

In aviation terms Etihad Airways is still a relatively young airline and this year we celebrated our 12th birthday. However we have achieved a lot in those 12 years, culminating with Etihad Airways winning the top award at last year's World Travel Awards, being voted World's Leading Airline, for an unprecedented sixth consecutive year.

Here in Ireland, Etihad Airways has experienced strong growth since the launch over eight years ago. Within eight months of the Dublin route commencing we had increased our services from four flights a week to a daily service, and then increased again to 10 flights a week.

The customer demand is strong in the Irish market and last Summer we increased our Dublin service to double daily. After a short break this Winter, it will be returning next Summer.

Last summer we increased our Dublin service to double daily

The schedule for the double daily flights now ensures connectivity both ways with 800 weekly connections to 45 Etihad Airways destinations in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, including Bangkok, Beijing, Brisbane, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Melbourne, Singapore, Sydney and Tokyo.

Ireland is a country steeped in aviation history with some of the world's top companies based in Ireland and some 250 companies supporting the sector also based in the country. The sector is of major importance to Ireland, contributing over €4 billion di-

rectly to GDP and supporting over 40,000 jobs.

Etihad Airways will continue to be part of the history and future of aviation in Ireland. We've already been operating in Ireland for over 8 years and during this time we have backed the route with significant investment.

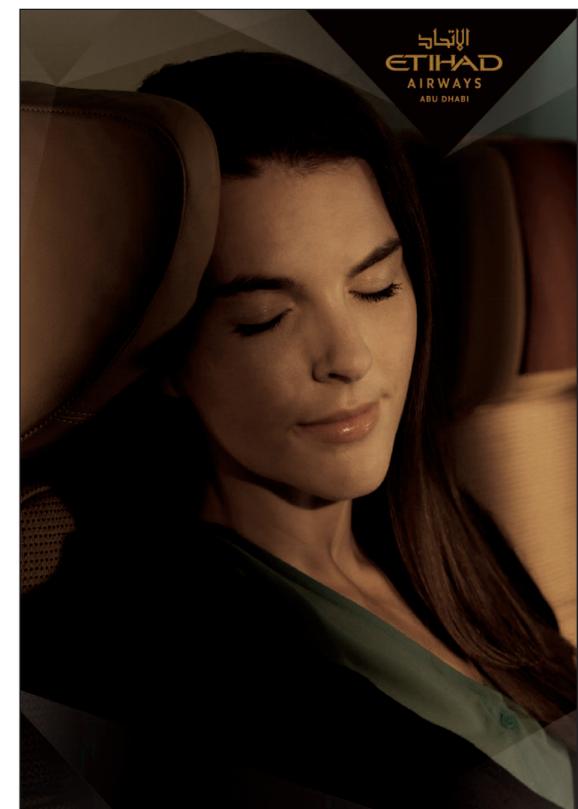
From being the first airline to operate scheduled flights out of T2, to the opening of our premium lounge in the same terminal; to the addition of a Line Maintenance facility at Dublin Airport, Ireland is an important part of our European network and we will continue to connect the country to a network of over 100 global destinations.

Our offer on board includes Etihad Airways' award-winning Economy class, which allows passengers to enjoy one of the world's most spacious and ergonomically designed economy seats, while cradle recline ensures a more comfortable ergonomic seating position.

All passengers can also enjoy over 750 hours of on-demand entertainment on a personal 10.4-inch touch screen. While guests flying with children can enjoy our free Flying Nanny service, which includes a Family pack to keep the kids entertained during the flight.

Etihad Airways is recognised as having the best Business class, long haul and leading airline product flying out of Ireland; having won numerous awards for the service. Etihad Airways' Business class has the only guaranteed fully flat-bed flying east out of Dublin, all with aisle access.

Irish guests in Business class can also enjoy the complimentary door-to-door Etihad Airways Chauffeur service before relaxing at the exclusive Premium lounge at Dublin Airport. While travelling Business class



passengers can enjoy "Dine Anytime" as they are guided by our Onboard Food & Beverage Manager through our menus which have been inspired by upmarket bistros.

It's been another year of great progress by the airline. Last year Etihad Airways unveiled its new product and service offering on the Airbus A380 and Boeing B787 Dreamliner aircraft. This introduced The Residence by Etihad, the world's most luxurious living space in the air.

The Residence is the breathtaking and completely new forward upper-deck cabin on the A380. Accommodating single or double occupancy, it features a living room, separate double bedroom and ensuite shower room. Guests in The Residence also have a personal Butler.

On the B787, Etihad Airways has designed an enhanced First Suite.

The A380 features the revolutionary First Apartments, which are fully private suites with a separate reclining lounge seat and full-length bed, as well as a chilled mini-bar, personal vanity unit and wardrobe.

The Business Studio and Economy Smart Seat features on both the A380 and the B787.

The new cabins and service offering follow the airline's pledge to transform air travel and make every guest journey a remarkable one.

From a sponsorship perspective in Ireland we have been a lead sponsor of the GAA All Ireland Hurling Senior Championship since 2008 and this year we sponsored the inaugural GAA

World Games, which were held in Abu Dhabi.

In January of this year Etihad Airways was named the Best Long Haul Airline for the fifth year running at the Irish Travel Industry Awards. With a multi-million dollar investment in our workforce, fleet, in-flight service and planning and resourcing systems, these investments will continue to place Etihad Airways at the forefront of aviation travel.

Etihad Airways has one clear and simple goal – to be the best airline in the world and these recent awards are a reflection of the determination and drive of everyone involved with the airline to constantly strive to improve our service and product. Ireland will play a part in ensuring we achieve our ambition to be the very best.

Ten great things to do in UAE

ENJOY a desert safari

Don't miss a chance to experience the Bedouin way of life that has lasted for centuries. Many firms offer desert safaris so its worth checking them out in advance. Typically, a four-wheel drive will take you out to the desert for a barbecue picnic with shisha, and you will sample dune bashing and see falcons in action.



GAZE UP IN WONDER AT the Burj Khalifa



Opened on January 4, 2010, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai is the world's tallest building at 829.8metres (2,722 feet - or half a mile high!). It has since featured in Mission Impossible and you can visit the top deck for AED300 (€75).



SAIL the Dubai Creek

Dubai Creek is the old part of this ultra-modern city and a beautiful place to visit, particularly in the evening. The little ferries, the Abras, are fun and cheap — just one dirham (25c) per crossing!

TAKE TEA AT the Burj al-Arab

This seven-star hotel has now become an icon of Dubai. It is a by-word for luxury and while most pockets cannot dream of staying there, afternoon tea is a great treat for that special day. Prices start at AED400 (approx €101) per person.



VROOM! Ferrari World

Petrolheads will love this Abu Dhabi theme park dedicated to the legendary sports car. Rides, simulators, shops and other attractions. Ticket prices start at AED250/206 (€63/€51) but priority levels are available up to AED500.

SHOP TILL YOU DROP at mega-Malls

AS the Sex and City movie sequel showed, Dubai is a place for the serious shopper - the Dubai Mall under the Burj Khalifa is the world's biggest with 1,200 stores over 12.1 million sq ft. But there are more manageable ones with lots of great shops — and almost all the international brand you can name — where bargains can be found. Mall of the Emirates near the Burj Al Arab has just 520 stores but its attractions include an indoor ski slope (with a cafe-bar half way up!) where you can hire skis and instructors. The City Centre Deira is also worth a visit if you're in the area.



MARVEL AT the Fountains

This spectacular sight is available every 30 minutes at lunchtime and then from 6pm-11pm each evening — and it's free! Your jaw will drop as you watch the water dance and sing and there's no doubt it is best to visit at night when a light show makes it even better. It's close to the Burj Khalifa.



GO TO SEE Awhala Fort

Awhala Fort in Fujairah was built in the 8th century BC, and has a huge entrance, control point and monitoring tower. It is the largest fort in the south east region of the Arabian Peninsula and has walls 2.4m thick.



HAGGLE at the Souk



There are few better places to buy gold in the world that than in the Old Gold Souk at the Creek in Dubai. The window displays will dazzle and the store owners expect to negotiate so make sure you haggle and NEVER pay the label price! It's very safe to visit, and buy.

VISIT Sharjah Museum



The first evidence of human existence in the UAE was found on Alfaya Mountain, dating back to around 8500 BC. Some discoveries dating back to Stone Age are displayed in Sharjah Museum.

Dubai Duty Free provides a boost to Rory McIlroy's Irish golf tournament

THE news that Dubai Duty Free has renewed its backing of the Irish Open Hosted by the Rory Foundation has given a huge boost to the top golf event held in Ireland each year.

Major winner Rory McIlroy was delighted at the news.

"I would like to thank Colm McLoughlin of Dubai Duty Free and Keith Pelley of The European Tour for supporting my vision to develop the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open Hosted by the Rory Foundation into one of the leading events on The European Tour's schedule over the next three years.

"I was delighted with the support I received, not only from the players who competed this year, but also from the fans who came along to the Irish Open at Royal County Down in May - they made it another sell-out tournament. I am sure The K Club - on the 10th anniversary as host of the 2006 Ryder Cup - will be an excellent venue for the 2016 Irish Open."

The event will be held at the Kildare venue from 19-22 May.



Fore! Rory McIlroy tees off - the event hosted by his foundation has been backed for a further three years

Developing good trading relationships with UAE

The Arab Irish Chamber of Commerce provides a great service as well as an insight to the Arab world, writes CEO and Secretary General **Ahmad Younis**

APPROXIMATELY the same size as Ireland, the UAE also shares with us a vital and strategic location, a dynamic globalised economy and a growing population. With 9.4 million inhabitants, the UAE makes up 2.5% of the Arab world's population. But with Irish exports of €358 million in 2014, this accounts for over three times the share (almost 8%) of Irish exports to the Arab world, where the UAE is Ireland's second largest trading partner.

These exports are well spread across both 'wings' of the Irish economy. A regular concern about Irish exports is that they are driven by the multinational sector; but as far as the Arab world is concerned, both the multinational and more jobs-rich indigenous sectors are equally important. And Ireland's huge trade surplus with the UAE (at €19m a year, Ireland's imports from the UAE are less than one-tenth of its exports) reflects the enormous potential of the entire region for Irish growth and jobs.

With the UAE Embassy in Ireland, this will strengthen its ties and commercial links with Ireland. This is a tribute to the good work done by the

Ambassador, His Excellency Dr Saeed Al-Shamsi, as well as by Enterprise Ireland and An Bord Bia, whose offices in the UAE give Irish companies an excellent network of support and advice.

Likewise the Arab Irish Chamber of Commerce (AICC) provides strong support to Irish firms in the region across a variety of business sectors, including food and consumer goods, healthcare, construction, oil, water, financial services, tourism, ICT and aviation.

To describe the AICC as a mere facilitator, however, is to downplay its significance. Its various services include the provision of advice regarding legal and documentary requirements for exporting to each of the Arab countries;

Expansion shows our commitment to promote Irish exports
Ahmad Younis

translation of official documents to and from Arabic; and assistance with visas and introductions.

The new headquarters of the Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce (AICC) was officially opened on October 22 by Richard Bruton TD, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

Speaking at the official opening ceremony, Ahmad Younis, Secretary General of the AICC, said: "Our new headquarters will serve as a focal point for The Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce engagement activities, providing members with access to the Chamber's complete depth of experience for all member organisations and individuals who are involved in, or have an interest in, commercial relationships between Ireland and the Arab world.

"The expansion our Chamber shows our commitment to continuing to promote Irish exports and services to the Arab world, and to showing the importance of the Arab region to the Irish commerce."

Richard Bruton TD added: "Over the past three years there have been nine Government visits to the Gulf and we



Friendship: Ahmad Younis of the AICC with Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Minister Richard Bruton

were delighted to welcome delegations to Ireland as these visits are a key mechanism in bringing together commercial opportunities for companies.

"I am delighted to be here today to open the new headquarters of the Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce. Over the past 28 years the Arab-Irish

Chamber of Commerce has been fostering and developing links between Ireland and the Arab world.

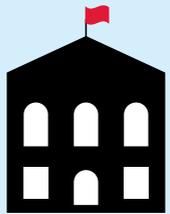
"I look forward to continuing to develop our trading relationship within the region and wish the Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce continued success."



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