USGBC and Qatar GBC Highlight Importance of Green Buildings alongside UN Climate Negotiations at Msheireb Enrichment Centre

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(Doha, Qatar – Dec. 4, 2012) – In conjunction with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Eighteenth Conference of Parties (COP18), the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) hosted a joint event at Msheireb Enrichment Centre,highlighting the growth of green building construction throughout the world, with a focus on Doha and the greater Middle East region.

The event, "Building the Green Economy through Sustainable Design and Construction" featured a guided tour of the Msheireb Enrichment Centre, an elegant museum exhibit taking guests through Qatar's past, present and future. The tour was followed by remarks by Meshal Al Shamari, director of QGBC, and Peter Templeton, senior vice president of global market development at USGBC.

"With the fifth greatest number of LEED registered and certified buildings outside the United States, Doha is a fitting backdrop to discuss the booming green building industry and economy," said Templeton.

Following the session, participants viewed a detailed model of Msheireb Downtown Doha. The QR20 billion project is implementing an original architectural language developed by the world's leading consultants, architects and academics over three years, including experts from top U.S. universities, Yale, Harvard, Princeton and MIT.

Msheireb Properties' flagship project will be the world's largest sustainable community once completed and is aiming for LEED certification for all its buildings.
The combination of the latest clean technology and traditional building practices, such as thick split walls, small windows, shaded walkways and streets that chart the course of inland breezes, allows Msheireb Downtown Doha to manage the local desert climate more efficiently, achieving a notable reduction in its carbon footprint compared with an urban development of a similar size.

On average, buildings within the project will be 32 percent more energy efficient than conventional city structures.

McGraw-Hill Construction's Harvey Bernstein, vice president of industry insights & alliances, was a featured speaker at the event, and presented new survey findings on world green building trends. McGraw-Hill Construction, in partnership with United Technologies Corporation, recently issued a world green building report.
"The study indicates a shift in the global construction market, now viewing green as a business opportunity rather than a niche market. The findings indicate strong growth for green building around the world, and companies must be prepared for the transition," noted Bernstein. "The two largest opportunity areas for green building globally are in new commercial construction and renovation of existing buildings—with more than half of all respondents planning projects in these sectors."

The timing of the event drew the attention of the international delegates present in Doha for the UN climate conference. The sustainability of buildings and urban centers is crucial to addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. The anticipated outcomes of the conference, including the new market mechanisms for compliance, offer funding opportunities for green building construction and other sustainable development programs globally.

U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)
The U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building certification program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities. For more information, visit usgbc.org and follow us on Twitter @USGBC and Facebook.

Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC)
Qatar Green Building Council is a non-profit, membership-driven organization providing leadership and encouraging collaboration in conducting environmentally sustainable practices for green building design and development in Qatar. QGBC also aims to support the overall health and sustainability of the environment, the people, and economic security in Qatar for generations to come. The council, a member of Qatar Foundation, was formally established in 2009 by a decree signed by H.H. Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and is helping Qatar on its journey to establish a post-hydrocarbon, knowledge economy and progressive society. Through QGBC, Qatar will join a network of 80 different countries that run active national green building councils under the umbrella of the World Green Building Council.

QGBC's members include, representatives from government, real estate developers, investors, facilities managers, consultants, constructors, manufacturers & suppliers, oil & gas, professional firms, financial services, telecom/technology, academia, NGOs & media. QGBC is setting up operations from its HQ, organizing awareness events, knowledge seminars, training, forums and networking sessions with the like-minded. To learn more visit qatargbc.org.

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