



EU – GCC DIALOGUE ON ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PHASE II

A Project funded by the European Union

5. ACTIVITY REPORT

EU-Qatar Dialogue on Safe and Resilient Food Trade

A project implemented by DAI
in consortium with AHK and
ICCS



German Emirati Joint Council
for Industry and Commerce
المجلس الألماني الإماراتي
المشترك للصناعة و التجارة

Activity Report

EU–QA Dialogue on Safe and Resilient Food Trade

22 June 2026, Doha

I. Summary

	Description
Theme	EU–Qatar Dialogue on Safe and Resilient Food Trade under the EU-GCC Dialogue on Economic Diversification II.
Purpose	Strengthen EU–Qatar cooperation on food security, food safety, resilient supply chains and sustainable trade.
Date and time	22 June 2026
Venue	W Hotel, Doha
Organized by	- DAI - AHK Representative Qatar
Supported by	Delegation of the European Union to the State of Qatar
Format	Hybrid
Language	English
Main Target Audience	Qatari Government authorities, EU and Qatari institutions, food industry representatives from EU and Qatar, business community and experts.
Number of Participants	95

II. Performance Reporting

1. Forum Delivery

1.1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Time	10:00 am – 10:10 am
Speaker	Welcome Remarks – H.E. Dr. Cristian Tudor, Ambassador of the European Union to Qatar

H.E. Dr. Cristian Tudor highlighted that food security has become a strategic priority due to geopolitical uncertainty and supply-chain disruptions. He emphasized the EU's commitment to rules-based trade, resilient supply chains and practical cooperation with Qatar, noting shared interests in food safety, transparent market access and sustainable agriculture.

1.2. Keynote: Food Security in Qatar: Building a Resilient and Sustainable Food System

Time	10:10 am – 10:25 am
Speaker	• Keynote- Mr. Jose Iralde, Chief Strategy Officer, Hassad Food

Jose Iralde presented Qatar's National Food Security Strategy based on three pillars: strengthening local production, expanding strategic reserves and diversifying international sourcing. He explained how recent regional disruptions demonstrated the value of investments made since the 2017 blockade, including strategic storage, logistics infrastructure, data-driven monitoring and close coordination between government and the private sector. Qatar aims to increase self-sufficiency while remaining an open trading nation seeking international partnerships.

1.3. Online Presentation on EU Food Control System and Cooperation Points

Time	10:25 am - 10:40 am
Speaker	• Mr. Jan Bloemendal, European Commission, DG SANTE

Jan Bloemendal (DG SANTE) presented the EU food safety architecture, including EFSA, harmonised legislation, TRACES certification and the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). He highlighted opportunities for regulatory cooperation, digital certification, transparency and future discussions on export procedures and food safety governance.

1.4. Fireside Chat: Resilient by Design: Qatar's Journey Towards Food Security and Trade Resilience

Time	10:40 am - 11:00 am
Moderator	• Mr. Omar Naim, Senior Consultant, Roland Berger
Speakers	• Mr. Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Obaidli, Chairman of the Food Security Committee, Qatar Chamber • Mr. Jose Iralde, Chief Strategy Officer, Hassad Food

The fireside discussion underscored that food security extends well beyond ensuring a stable food supply; it requires building resilient, adaptive, and sustainable food systems capable of withstanding future geopolitical, economic, and environmental challenges. Both speakers highlighted the importance of long-term strategic planning, public-private partnerships, innovation, digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and investment as essential enablers of resilience.

Mr. Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Obaidli emphasised that Qatar's approach to food security is based on developing an integrated ecosystem rather than focusing solely on food imports. Drawing on the country's experience in managing successive crises, he highlighted the value of strategic planning, international cooperation, and strong collaboration between the public and private sectors. He stressed that Qatar views the European Union not merely as a supplier of agri-food products, but as a strategic partner in research and development, technology transfer, innovation, food safety, sustainable agriculture, and advanced digital solutions. He further emphasised that the complementary strengths of the EU and Qatar create significant opportunities for a genuine win-win partnership, supporting Qatar's long-term ambition to

become a regional hub for food security, food technologies, and sustainable agri-food innovation. Mr. Jose Iralde reinforced these messages by highlighting the importance of preparedness, strategic infrastructure, diversified trade routes, real-time data, and predictive analytics in strengthening food system resilience. He encouraged European companies to view Qatar not only as an export destination but also as a strategic regional platform for investment, innovation, food processing, and value-added agribusiness, serving wider markets across the Gulf and beyond.

1.5. EU Perspective on Food Security and Trade (online contribution)

Time	11:00 am - 11:30 am
Speakers	• Mr. Bartosz Hackbart, European Commission, DG AGRI • Mr. Damian Gadzinowski, European Commission, DG AGRI

Representatives of DG AGRI highlighted the European Union's approach to strengthening resilient agricultural and food systems through sustainable production, predictable market access, and open, rules-based international trade. The keynote presentations emphasised that food security is best achieved through diversified sourcing, transparent and stable regulatory frameworks, sustainable agricultural practices, and strong international partnerships. The speakers also underscored the importance of maintaining resilient global supply chains, fostering innovation, and ensuring that trade policies support both food security and long-term sustainability. In this context, enhanced EU–Qatar cooperation was presented as an opportunity to strengthen resilient food systems, facilitate market access, and promote knowledge exchange in support of shared food security objectives.

1.6. Panel Discussion "From Production to Distribution – Strengthening Food Security Across the Food Value Chain" with subsequent Q&A

Time	11:30 am - 12:30 am:
Moderator	• Mrs. Noha Nassim, Manager Sustainability Services, Forvis Mazars
Speakers	• Ms. Najat Al Abdulmalik, Head of Food Safety Laboratories, Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) • Mrs. Heba Leith, Regional Business Development Advisor, Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands • Mr. Tarun Singh Panwar, Quality and Product Development Director, Baladna • Mr. Philipp-Andreas Schmidt, Head of Public Affairs, Bayer

The panel discussion explored food security from a comprehensive value-chain perspective, examining how production, food safety, logistics, innovation, sustainability and international trade must work together to strengthen the resilience of food systems. Although the panellists represented different sectors and areas of expertise, the discussion demonstrated broad consensus that food security requires integrated approaches supported by innovation, science-based policymaking and strong multi-stakeholder cooperation.

A central theme throughout the discussion was the importance of food safety as a fundamental pillar of food security. Participants highlighted that effective regulatory frameworks, advanced laboratory capacity, risk-based inspections and internationally recognised standards are essential to protecting public health, maintaining consumer confidence and facilitating reliable international food trade. Strong food safety systems were recognised as critical enablers of resilient and transparent supply chains.

The discussion also emphasised the role of innovation and sustainable agricultural practices in addressing growing global challenges, including climate change, resource scarcity and increasing food demand. Technological innovation, precision agriculture, greenhouse cultivation, biotechnology and climate-smart

farming were identified as important tools for improving productivity while reducing environmental impacts and making more efficient use of natural resources.

Another recurring theme was the importance of digitalisation and emerging technologies. Participants noted that artificial intelligence, data analytics and digital traceability systems are becoming increasingly important for strengthening supply-chain visibility, improving quality assurance, enhancing risk forecasting and supporting evidence-based decision-making across the food value chain.

The panel further highlighted that public-private partnerships are essential for strengthening food system resilience. Governments, industry, research institutions and farmers each have complementary roles in driving innovation, facilitating technology transfer, strengthening food safety systems and accelerating the adoption of sustainable agricultural solutions. Collaboration across sectors was identified as a prerequisite for building resilient food systems capable of responding effectively to future disruptions.

The discussion also reinforced the importance of maintaining a balanced approach that combines local production, strategic reserves and diversified international trade. Participants agreed that resilient food systems cannot rely on a single solution, but require diversified sourcing strategies, reliable logistics, predictable market access and strong international partnerships.

Overall, the panel highlighted significant opportunities for enhanced EU–Qatar cooperation across the entire food value chain. European expertise in food safety, agricultural innovation, biotechnology and sustainable production complements Qatar's strategic investments, modern infrastructure and long-term commitment to strengthening food security. Together, these complementary strengths provide a solid foundation for expanding cooperation in research, technology transfer, digital innovation and sustainable agri-food systems, contributing to greater resilience and shared economic growth.

2. Key Outcomes

- The dialogue confirmed a strong alignment between European and Qatari priorities on strengthening resilient, safe and sustainable food systems. Both sides recognised that food security requires a balanced approach combining local production, strategic reserves, diversified international trade and trusted international partnerships.
- The discussions reaffirmed the European Union's role as a strategic partner for Qatar in food safety, regulatory excellence, sustainable agriculture, research, innovation and advanced agri-food technologies. European expertise in food safety systems, biotechnology, digitalisation and climate-smart agriculture was recognised as highly complementary to Qatar's long-term food security objectives.
- From the Qatari perspective, participants emphasised that food security extends beyond ensuring food supply and should be viewed as the development of resilient and sustainable food ecosystems. Long-term strategic planning, public-private partnerships and international cooperation were identified as essential pillars for strengthening resilience and ensuring preparedness for future disruptions.
- A key message from the dialogue was Qatar's ambition to evolve from a food-importing market into a regional hub for food security, food technologies and value-added agri-food industries. Participants encouraged European companies to view Qatar not only as an export destination, but also as a strategic regional platform for investment, innovation, food processing, logistics and access to wider Gulf and international markets.
- The discussions highlighted the importance of moving beyond a traditional buyer-supplier relationship towards a long-term strategic partnership between the EU and Qatar. Such cooperation should increasingly focus on research and development, technology transfer, artificial intelligence, digital solutions, sustainable agriculture, food safety, and innovation, leveraging Europe's technological expertise together with Qatar's investment capacity, modern infrastructure and strategic geographic position.

- Participants agreed that digitalisation, artificial intelligence, predictive analytics and real-time data will play an increasingly important role in strengthening food system resilience, improving supply-chain visibility, anticipating disruptions and supporting evidence-based decision-making.
- Finally, the dialogue reinforced the importance of public-private collaboration in delivering resilient food systems. Governments, industry, research institutions and international partners were recognised as having complementary roles in accelerating innovation, strengthening food safety, promoting sustainable agricultural practices and building resilient food value chains capable of responding to future global challenges.

III. Annexes

Annex 1: Agenda

EU–QA Dialogue on Safe and Resilient Food Trade

22 June 2026

Doha, Qatar

Agenda

09:30 AM - 10:00 AM: Registration and Welcome Coffee

10:00 AM - 10:10 AM: Opening Remarks

H.E. Dr. Cristian Tudor, Ambassador of the European Union to Qatar

10:10 AM - 10:25 AM: Food Security in Qatar: Building a Resilient and Sustainable Food System

Mr. Jose Iralde, Chief Strategy Officer, Hassad Food

10:25 AM - 10:40 AM: EU Food Control System and Cooperation Points (online contribution)

Mr. Jan Bloemendal, European Commission, DG SANTE

10:40 AM - 11:00 AM: Fireside Chat "Resilient by Design: Qatar's Journey Towards Food Security and Trade Resilience"

Mr. Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Obaidli, Chairman of the Food Security Committee, Qatar Chamber

Mr. Jose Iralde, Chief Strategy Officer, Hassad Food

Moderator: *Mr. Omar Naim, Senior Consultant, Roland Berger*

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM: EU Perspective on Food Security and Trade (online contribution)

Mr. Bartosz Hackbart, European Commission, DG AGRI

Mr. Damian Gadzinowski, European Commission, DG AGRI

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM: Panel Discussion "From Production to Distribution – Strengthening Food Security Across the Food Value Chain" with subsequent Q&A

Ms. Najat Al Abdulmalik, Head of Food Safety Laboratories, Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)

Mrs. Heba Leith, Regional Business Development Advisor, Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands

Mr. Tarun Singh Panwar, Quality and Product Development Director, Baladna

Mr. Philipp-Andreas Schmidt, Head of Public Affairs, Bayer

Moderator: *Mrs. Noha Nassim, Manager Sustainability Services, Forvis Mazars*

12:30 PM - 13:00 PM: Networking Breakfast

Buffet breakfast and informal networking among participants.