

Brazil Goes to Middle East Looking for Investors and Opportunities

Contributed by Marina Sarruf
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Businessmen who are going to participate in the trade delegation from the southern Brazilian state of Santa Catarina to the countries of the Gulf also want to attract investment from the Arab countries, mainly in the tourism sector.

This information was disclosed by the president of the state's Chamber of Construction Industries (CEIC), José Antonio Vieira, who is going to represent 14 sector unions during the trip.

The mission, to take place between October 26 and November 06, is organized by the Federation of Industries of the State of Santa Catarina (Fiesc) and by the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce.

"The objective of the delegation is to improve relations of Santa Catarina's construction sector productive chain with the Arab countries. We are going to identify possibilities to provide services and also attract investment to the state," said Vieira.

According to him, the United Arab Emirates, one of the countries to be visited by the businessmen, invests heavily in enterprises for tourists. "Santa Catarina is also a state with a strong tourist potential. The sector is a good investment opportunity for the Arabs," he said.

According to Vieira, the delegation will be a first contact with Arab businessmen and aims at future business generation. In the Emirates, the businessmen are going to visit the Big 5 Show, the largest construction sector fair in the Middle East.

They are also going to Salahuddin street, where there are many construction material shops. Visits to the Malaysian and Chinese distribution centers and to Ace Hardware, the largest distributor of construction material in the country, are also scheduled. The delegation is also going to travel to Kuwait and Qatar.

According to Vieira, the civil construction sector is responsible for 7% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Santa Catarina. The sector includes 5,000 companies and employs around 50,000 people. Last year, 2.5 million construction works were executed in the state.

Polystyrene

Another businessman to participate in the delegation is Albano Schmidt, president of Termotécnica, which makes, among other articles, construction material in polystyrene. "I want to learn about the technology used in construction in the Arab countries," he said.

According to him, Termotécnica produces 1,800 tons of polystyrene per month and supplies large companies like Electrolux Brazil and Multibras, makers of electronic products. The company produces the packages used by these companies. "Our products are not exported, but I want to see how polystyrene is used in the construction sector in the Arab countries," said Schmidt.

According to him, Dubai is known as the "construction site" in the Arab world. "I intend to check what kinds of solutions are used in constructions there and to see whether it is possible to apply them here," he added.

Termotécnica, established in the city of Joinville in 1961, is a family company and has five factories in the states of São Paulo (in the southeast of Brazil), Goiás (midwest), Amazonas (north) and Paraná and Santa Catarina (both in the south of the country). In total, the company employs 920 people.

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