

Trading chambers praised for bridging distant shores

CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL

SEIZING the opportunities of a changing world will be made easier in South Australia by the strength of its multicultural business ties, the State Government said last night.

"We are living in a world where the economic balance of power is rapidly changing," Attorney-General Michael Atkinson said. "India and China are staking their claims as the new powerhouses.

"Both Australia and this state need to be on the ball to take advantage of the many opportunities this shift in economic power represents."

Addressing the awards dinner for the Council for International Trade and Commerce SA, he said SA needed to develop across many sectors, not just defence and mining.

"And this is where CITCSA and the member chambers can play an ever more important role," he said.

"... Your multicultural backgrounds give this state a boost in its attempts to sell its message overseas."

Mr Atkinson noted that since 1999, CITCSA chambers had supported 70 trade missions, and constituent businesses had contributed about \$200 million to the state's economy.

Under the chairmanship of Nick Begakis, CITCSA brings together chambers with links to 40 countries.

THE WINNERS

■ **International Chamber of the Year** - Australian Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SA chapter).

■ **International Business Ambassador** - Steve Marafiotte.

■ **Small Emerging Chamber** - Japan Australia Business Council SA.

■ **Long-term Contribution by an Individual** - Leon Coppins.

■ **Long-term Contribution by an Organisation** - Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Adelaide).

Last night, the Australian Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry won CITCSA's International Chamber of the Year Award. It was recognised for "strategically expanding its area of influence", services to its members, contribution to CITCSA and its links with government agencies.

Arab chamber chairwoman Minerva Nasser-Eddine joined the organisation to help businesses investing or exporting to the Middle East.

"Through my research and business, I realised the importance and significance of understanding the social, cultural and political (aspects) of the Arab world," she said.

MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT: Minerva Nasser-Eddine ... "understanding the social, cultural and political (aspects) of the Arab world".

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