

HER HIGHNESS ATTENDS QATAR FOUNDATION'S SECOND ANNUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING FORUM

Memorandum Of Understanding Signed Between Qatar Foundation And The International Baccalaureate

Doha, Qatar, 9 May 2015: Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), attended the Second Annual Teaching and Learning Forum today. The event, which brought together 1,000 teachers from across the country, was organised by the Education Development Institute (EDI), part of QF's Pre-University Education.

The Forum was also attended by a number of dignitaries and senior officials from Qatar Foundation, including Her Excellency Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Vice-Chairperson of Qatar Foundation; Engineer Saad Al Muhannadi, President of Qatar Foundation; Dr Siva Kumari, Director General of the International Baccalaureate (IB); Sir Ken Robinson, PhD, internationally recognised leader in the development of education, creativity and innovation; Mrs Munira bint Nasser al-Misnad, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Social Action; Engineer Jassim Telefat, Group Executive Director of Qatar Foundation Capital Projects and Facilities Management; Fawzia Al Khater, Director of Education Institute, the Supreme Education Council; Dr Mazen Jassim Al Jaidah, member of Qatar Foundation Board; and Buthaina Al Nuaimi, Executive Director of Pre-University Education, Qatar Foundation.

The Teaching and Learning Forum falls under QF's wider, year-round professional development programme to promote continuous life-long learning for teachers in primary and secondary schools. Designed to empower K-12 teachers to unlock the potential of students, the Forum supports the Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV2030) of transforming the country into a knowledge-based economy.

Sheikha Noof Ahmed bin Saif Al-Thani, Head of the Teaching and Learning Forum 2015, opened the conference: "Since its launch last year, the Education Development Institute has grown significantly," she said. "Last year, we had 200 teachers attend and we held 30 workshops; this year, we have brought together 1,000 teachers and have organised 80 workshops."

"To improve education and develop the skills of teachers, we have also agreed on several partnerships and agreements with the Supreme Education Council, the International

Baccalaureate, Georgetown University in Qatar, Qatar University, and Harvard University, and there will be more in the future,” Sheikha Noof concluded.

Sir Ken Robinson delivered the keynote speech at the opening session. “It is a fantastic honour for me to be here,” he said. “I have been wanting to come to Qatar for a while. The World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) conference is having such an impact internationally on people’s thinking about the direction of education, about the dynamics of education; it has become a place that you need to attend, to participate in, if you are to keep pace with what is happening internationally. This is my first time in Qatar, but I can’t think of a better occasion to be here, for this Education Development Institute session.”

Sir Ken emphasised the importance of placing creativity at the heart of education, saying: “Children have tremendous depths of creative power; we just have to understand it, recognise it, and compliment it. It’s there. The aim of education is to enable students to understand the world around them, and talents within them, so that they can become fulfilled individuals and active, compassionate citizens.”

He added: “We live in revolutionary times in education, in the sense that many values that we have taken for granted over time simply don’t apply. If we are to meet this revolution, collectively, globally, then we have to question these values, think differently, behave differently, and we have to run our institutions differently, especially our education institutions. Most of our institutions were designed, invented, conceived of in other times for other purposes. Simply attempting to tighten up or make more efficient, a model that is past its expiry date will not work. We need a different way to do things.”

“The symbol of Qatar Foundation is the Sidra tree, and its ability to live in the desert, to take the nutrients it needs from the earth, and to use this beautiful plant to provide shade for everybody else. I love this metaphor. We are of the earth, we are part of the cycle of things, and we have become detached from it over the past 300 years. Education has that strategic mission, to reconnect us to each other, and to the planet, and to the benefit of the earth we live on. A lot of the problems we face have been created by people, but if we double our creative powers, we can find new solutions to them. This is the mission of the education, which is why teaching is so important. It’s why the teaching of the centre of education renewal and transformation, and I think it is why the EDI and the work that this foundation, both here and internationally, is so important.”



The event featured 80 workshops divided into three different sessions. Addressing different topics, the sessions were carefully selected to hone the skills and knowledge of the participating teachers. The workshops focused on critical issues that will promote innovative instructional practices in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), in Early Childhood Education (children from the ages of 6 months to 5 years), and in Arabic Language Teaching and other subjects taught in schools.

Additionally, following the opening ceremony, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Qatar Foundation and the International Baccalaureate (IB) represented respectively by Engineer Saad Al Muhannadi, President of Qatar Foundation, and Dr Siva Kumari, Director General of the International Baccalaureate. The agreement aims to promote research and hold joint conferences to support the growth of educators in Qatar, and the region. IB will also provide access to experts in order to build internal capabilities, and together, the organisations will identify further areas of mutual interest.

Qatar Foundation firmly believes that education is the first step to empowering people and shaping the future; therefore, over the last 20 years has been dedicated to building a comprehensive integrated learning environment, which encourages creativity and innovation from an early age.

Indeed, within QF's Pre-University Education, there are eight world-class academic institutes, which successfully facilitate learning from as young as six months old, all the way through preparatory and secondary school. The schools include five Qatar Academy schools, Qatar Leadership Academy, Awsaj Academy, and the Academic Bridge Program.

ENDS

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. QF was co-founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Qatar Foundation's Chairperson. QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key



sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>