

QATAR FOUNDATION PREPARES FOR THE DOHA YOUTH FORUM

Qatar Foundation Collaborates With Organising Committee Of The United Nations 13th Conference On Crime Prevention And Criminal Justice

Doha, Qatar, 10 March 2015: Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development continues its preparation to host The Doha Youth Forum on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in collaboration with the Organising Committee of the United Nations 13th Conference on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

The Forum, which is the-first-of-its-kind in the Middle East, will be held over three days from 7 - 9 April 2015 at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

Through the Doha Youth Forum, which precedes the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Doha from 12 - 19 April 2015, Qatar Foundation is seeking to nurture and develop young Qataris in order to achieve its mission of unlocking human potential and promoting a culture of excellence.

The Forum is a unique initiative launched by the State of Qatar to actively engage young people in discussions related to crime prevention and criminal justice, and familiarise them with the role and functions of the United Nations. In addition, the forum aims to discuss issues faced by students in the region and the problems caused by crime and how to prevent it through concrete and practical solutions.

Sheikha Amal bint Thamir Al-Thani, Executive Director of the Department of Health and Safety, Security and Environment at Qatar Foundation, said: "This forum provides an important opportunity to empower young people and ensure a rich and rewarding experience on practical and personal levels. This is closely aligned with Qatar Foundation's mission to promote human capability, to support the growth of the state and the Qatar National Vision 2030, and a culture of creativity and innovation in society."

She further added: "This conference will help develop the capability of young people, and allow them to acquire the educational, scientific and life experiences that enable them to take responsibility and leadership in the future. Since the conference is held under the auspices of the United Nations, it provides young participants with the experience and environment that simulates the work within the international organisation."

Col. Abdullah Khalifa Al Muftah, Director of Public Relations at the Department of Ministry of Interior, issued a statement about the importance of organising the forum in Doha, saying: “The Doha Youth Forum provides the students in Education City with an outlet to demonstrate their capabilities and skills, and reflects their contributing to, and participating in, issues debated by the Conference. The forum is also a Qatari initiative that is the first of its kind in the history of the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.”

Col. Abdullah Khalifa Al Muftah added that the forum had made great strides in international coordination and cooperation between Qatar Foundation and the Preparatory Commission in organising the event.

Qatar Foundation received a total of 185 applications, of which 123 have been accepted. This comprised of 46 males and 77 female students. Most of the applicants are between the ages of 16 and 26. Among the students selected to participate in the Forum, 31 students are from Qatar, 15 from India, 11 from Pakistan, nine from Egypt and seven from Jordan.

Most of the participants are in their formative years, enabling them to absorb, learn and realise their potential.

At the conference, the student delegates will be asked to role-play the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to discuss the three main themes – the first being ‘the successes and challenges in the implementation of comprehensive policies and strategies for the prevention of crime and criminal justice in order to strengthen the rule of law at the national and international levels and to support sustainable development’.

The second is ‘national approaches to public participation in the strengthening of crime prevention and criminal justice’. The third is ‘to enhance crime prevention and criminal justice, which will also include new forms of crimes such as cyber-crime and trafficking in cultural property, with the lessons learned applied to international cooperation to address the procedures’.

The conference will compile a final report to be presented at the culmination of the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at a ceremony to be held at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

Selection and Preparation

Currently, students and organisers are actively engaged in finalising all the preparations required to qualify the applicant students for effective participation in the Forum.

Teachers and faculty members play a significant role in the preparation of participating students. Dr Mohamed Evren Tok, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Public Policy in Islam Programme at Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies (QFIS), said: “Our role as a body of teaching is not just about mentoring, but administrating, organising, engaging, and enabling students to discuss. And this is really the core of Qatar Foundation; unlocking human potential. Therefore, our role, as the faculty members, is to unlock their potential – realise what they want to share, and realise what they want to get out of the exercise.”

Dr Mohamed Evren Tok continued: “We live in an age that requires us to be proactive. Planning is important, but the practical actions are more important. I think the participation of the youth in this Forum and the United Nations Congress will motivate them to make a tangible step towards confronting the challenges ahead.”

Dr Tuck, who was honoured with Hamad Bin Khalifa University’s Takreem Award for ‘Best Advisor’, said he had strong personal reasons for taking part. “I have many motivations for participating in the Forum, including its association with specialists in the field and studies on public policy. Security, Human Rights and the whole justice system intersects with the purposes of public policy. I also enjoy interacting with students as well as contributing to the community in which I live.”

On the role of the ‘SharePoint’ programme in facilitating communications among those involved in organising and preparing the forum, Dr Dawn Jones, Associate Provost for Academic Administration at Hamad bin Khalifa University, said: “SharePoint is a way to share documents and communication that is private to our group, as opposed to a more public forum. It is a tool to discuss, and share documents, reading materials and information that is helpful and will enable participants to learn about the basic concepts of criminal justice, crime prevention and some of the more specific concepts related to the different themes.”

Dr Jones added: “Considering they are fairly large groups, SharePoint serves a great purpose, especially if you are sending documents back and forth, ones that will be reviewed or even just accessed and read. Mass emails of that nature, especially if you have a number of versions of the same documents, tend to get confusing. For that purpose, to centrally locate reading materials, links to articles, reports, and videos, SharePoint is extremely helpful.

“Also, as we begin to start drafting recommendations that will be debated in the group, and then at the Forum itself, we are able to create a document that can be viewed and edited by any other member of the group. It locks out everyone else while one person edits the copy, so there will only be one master copy rather than multiple versions. Therefore, it is always the cleanest version, the latest version, and it keeps track of who made the last edit.”

Dr Jones, who is responsible for the selection of participating students, says the Forum provides a wonderful opportunity for the students to engage in an unprecedented event and discuss closely related developments and events in the Middle East.

“I think having the ability to engage with other students that do not necessarily come from similar backgrounds, are studying similar things or have similar interests, is beneficial. Learning how to deal with, and learning to work well in, these types of group dynamics will be of benefit to them later on.

“Gaining exposure to information from the UN congress, which typically the general public does not have access to, will be beneficial. And, in my opinion, one of the biggest opportunities that they will get out of this experience is the chance to be involved and attend the UN Congress

itself following the Forum. As a participant in the Forum, and having learned about these topics beforehand, being able to sit in on and listen to the Congress debate these ideas, understand what they are talking about, and learn about the potential impacts, is a once in a lifetime opportunity,” Dr Jones concluded.

The aim of the conferences on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which are held every five years, is to discuss global challenges to government and law enforcement bodies by high level policy-makers and representatives of various sectors, as well as exchange experiences in the field of research and development of laws and policies to identify trends and issues that arise in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.

Image Caption

Image 1: Participants during the first orientation session of the Doha Youth Forum

Image 2: Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development received 185 applications to participate in the forthcoming Doha Youth Forum

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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>