

PRESS RELEASE: Memorandum of Understanding signed By HBKU's Translation and Interpreting Institute and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the State of Qatar

Doha, February 21, 2015 – The Translation and Interpreting Institute (TII) of Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the State of Qatar on Sunday, February 15, 2015. The MoU sets a foundation for collaboration between the Language Center at TII and the Chinese Embassy in Qatar. Recognizing the importance of Arabic and Chinese language, education, and culture in the global economy, both parties have committed to collaboration in the areas of language teaching and cultural activities for the benefit of learners and the wider Qatari community.

The Language Center at TII supports the academic mission of the institute by currently offering students expert language training in five languages, including Mandarin Chinese. Aimed to serve the needs of the professional community in Doha, classes emphasize the integration of language and culture and incorporate technology in learning and teaching. As China is now the world's largest energy consumer and oil importer with 35 percent of its crude oil import in 2013 from GCC countries, the Mandarin Chinese course offering is in line with GCC-Sino economic partnerships.

Dr. Amal Al-Malki, Executive Director of the Translation and Interpreting Institute, commented, "The MoU with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China will help us explore opportunities to promote Chinese language and culture in Qatar as well as Arabic, Arab, and Qatari culture in China. The MoU helps realize our vision of building linguistic capacity in Qatar and opens the door to further collaborations with prominent Chinese institutions."

The agreement marks a strong commitment by TII and the Embassy to the promotion of language education opportunities. The parties are dedicated to supporting academic exchange and study abroad programs in Qatar and in China, and will also assist in the organization of public seminars on China, its languages, and culture, as we move towards "Qatar-China 2016", a year dedicated to mutual understanding, recognition, and appreciation between the two countries.

His Excellency Youzhen Gao, Ambassador of The People's Republic of China in the State of Qatar, stated "The Chinese language has the longest history of continuous use and the largest mother-tongue population. Along with China's domestic development and expansion of international exchange, many foreigners seek to learn the language in order to better understand Chinese culture."

He added, "The strategic partnership between China and Qatar is continuously developing. Looking to the future, we will be building the cooperative "Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" strategic project and will jointly hold the 2016 China-Qatar Cultural Year."

The Memorandum of Understanding with TII follows an earlier series of agreements made in November 2014 between the State of Qatar and China to strengthen bilateral relations. The MoU is valid for a period of two years, at which both parties will meet to evaluate the outcomes of the collaboration.

Those interested in learning more about language classes available at TII's Language Center may find information at <http://www.tii.qa/language-center/language-center>.

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About The Translation and Interpreting Institute

Hamad bin Khalifa's Translation and Interpreting Institute (TII) was established with a mission to build translation capacity in Qatar and the region. Under the umbrella of HBKU and as an initiative of Qatar Foundation, TII is situated in the prestigious Education City. It is a physical and virtual space that delivers sophisticated post-graduate translator and interpreter education, high-level training in a range of languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish) and quality translation and interpreting services of the highest international standards.

TII will contribute to capacity building in the areas of scholarly research and translator training through its Postgraduate Studies, Research Center, Language Center and Professional Services, delivering a qualified cadre of high-level professionals within the region.

About Hamad bin Khalifa University

Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is an emerging research university building upon unique collaborations with local and international partners. Located in Education City, HBKU seeks to provide unparalleled opportunities for scholarship, teaching, discovery, and learning for all of its students through an array of interdisciplinary programs.

HBKU's partners are Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Texas A&M University at Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Northwestern University in Qatar, HEC Paris in Qatar, and UCL Qatar.