

EXPERTS CALL FOR A COHESIVE APPROACH TO ESTABLISHING DOHA'S MODERN ARCHITECTURAL IDENTITY

Leading Architects And Sustainability Experts Meet To Debate Qatar's Current State Of Architectural Transformation

Doha, Qatar, 26 May 2015: Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), hosted an event this week aimed at assessing and debating Doha's current architectural transformation.

Leading architects and sustainability experts descended upon Hamad Bin Khalifa University Student Centre, for the event titled 'Can Sustainable Experimental Architecture with Respect for Cultural Heritage Exist?' on Monday, to discuss keeping Qatar's culture, traditions and values alive when planning major architectural projects.

Experts at the event agreed that identifying a cohesive, balanced approach to Doha's urban planning is of prime importance when keeping up with the ever changing face of global architectural trends seen in Qatar.

Eng Meshal Al Shamari, QGBC Director, said: "QGBC is working with leading institutions in the public and private sectors to raise awareness of the most pressing sustainability issues facing Qatar. This event is yet another crucial step in a series of educational and awareness efforts undertaken by QGBC on a regular basis. Sustainable architecture is a key element of green buildings and sustainability in Qatar that we would like to address in the long-term."

Doha's rapid urbanisation in the wake of major development and infrastructure projects, which is helping Qatar achieve the main objectives outlined in the Qatar National Vision (QNV2030), has brought about an increase in new architectural themes to the country.

Qatar's most senior architect and Chief Executive Officer of Arab Engineering Bureau, Engineer Ibrahim Mohamed Jaidah, added: "In line with the current global architectural trends, Qatar is striving to ensure that its unique heritage and culture continues to live, grounding the foundation of the development on the adaptation of microclimatic techniques with an inspiration that attempts to recapture what made the original so special. There are different and interesting things on the horizon in Qatar's architecture and its quality."

The QNV 2030 acknowledges the need to recognise and encourage Qatar's unique heritage and norms of the country's traditional architecture in the rapid urban development currently being witnessed in Doha.

In light of this, QGBC is thoroughly committed to supporting QF's commitment to fostering knowledge about environmental best practices and encouraging sustainable development in Qatar on its way to achieving the objectives of QNV 2030.

Dr Alex Amato, Head of Sustainability at QGBC, said: "QGBC is one of the main advocates of sustainability and green buildings in Qatar and regards cultural sustainability highly important under the social strand of the traditional sustainable triple bottom line. There are a fascinating range of new buildings that are contributing to making Qatar a worthy architectural destination, from both modern architectural expressionism to the development of a rich synthesis of international standards and traditional values. We would like to ensure that adequate efforts and time are invested in urban planning to ensure the required consistency in the process."

Doha is undoubtedly positioning itself as the 'must see' destination for all modern architecture enthusiasts as the State of Qatar's commitment to first-rate internationally-recognised architecture is gradually becoming evident with the inception of many iconic projects, including the Museum of Islamic art, the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Education City, Msheireb Properties, the West Bay Business District and the compelling Qatar National Museum.

Dr. Yasser Mahgoub, Head of department of Architecture and Urban Planning, College of Engineering at Qatar University, said: "Qatar is becoming a "laboratory" for architectural experiments that lack theoretical scientific guidance. New projects are replacing invaluable traditional environments at a rapid pace. This process can be effectively slowed down only through increasing awareness and facilitating public participation in urban and architectural decision making."

He added: "Architecture is the mirror of society. Architectural identity should not be imposed on people and buildings. It is a result of what people "think and do" during a particular period of history influenced by economic, ecologic and cultural variables."

Other leading experts who presented their visions at the event were Ameena Ahmadi, Technical Director of Capital Projects, Qatar Foundation, Mr Hafid Karem, Architect Partner and Area Manager of Ateliers Hafid Rakem, and Mr Timothy Makeower, Principal of Makeower Architects.

-ENDS-

For more information contact:

Abed Shirzai
abeds@bljworldwide.com
+974 7021 8259

About Qatar Green Building Council

Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) is a non-profit, membership-driven organisation providing leadership and encouraging collaboration in conducting environmentally sustainable practices for green building design and development in Qatar. QGBC also aims to support the overall health and sustainability of the environment, the people, and economic security in Qatar for generations to come. The council, a member of Qatar Foundation, was formally established in 2009 by a decree signed by H.H. Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and is helping Qatar on its journey to establish a post-hydrocarbon, knowledge economy and progressive society. Through QGBC, Qatar joins a network of 80 countries that run active national green building councils under the umbrella of the World Green Building Council.

QGBC's members include, representatives from government, real estate developers, investors, facilities managers, consultants, constructors, manufacturers & suppliers, oil & gas, professional firms, financial services, telecom/technology, academia, NGOs & media. QGBC is setting up operations from its HQ, organising awareness events, knowledge seminars, training, forums, and networking sessions with the like-minded. To learn more visit www.qatargbc.org.