

HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani attends the International Schools Arabic Debating Championship closing ceremony

Turkey takes the first place, Yemen in Second, Jordan in third and Qatar in Fourth

Doha – QatarDebate

Under the patronage of HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Vice Chairman of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, the International Schools Arabic Debating Championship organized by QatarDebate, member of Qatar Foundation concluded during a closing ceremony which took place on Wednesday, 26th March 2014 at the Qatar National Convention Center (QNCC).

Attending the ceremony was HE Saad bin Ibrahim Al Mohannadi, Chairman of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, in addition to the delegations from the countries participating in the international championship that include 22 teams from 18 Arab countries and four foreign countries.

The Yemeni and Turkish teams competed in the final round after going through a fierce semifinal with Qatar and Jordan. In the final debate, the two teams addressed the following topic: "This House believes that the deterioration of the Arabic language is caused by the different Arabic dialects." The Turkish team, Ihsan Jamal and Yousef Snu and Osama Bakha, represented the opposition, and the Yemeni team, Osama Haider and Muayed Al Razhy and Dia Saeed, represented the proposition. The competing members from each team strived to defend their own views on the case, where they submitted a set of arguments and evidence that supported their position amid the admiration and applause of the audience who showed their excitement during the final debate.

The judges panel included: "Wadha Al-Hajri from Qatar, Amina Juma from Egypt, Ali Al Sweidy from Qatar, Nabil Al Mufrih from Kuwait , Mohammad Salman from Malaysia, Ibrahim El Qarqouri from Tunisia, Fahd Al Subaie from Kuwait, and Saad Al Assad from Sudan .

From her part, Dr. Hayat Maarafi, Executive Director of QatarDebate, praised in her closing speech HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al-Thani's patronage of the competition and the honor of her presence.

She described the competition in her speech to have "Served as nourishment that provided us with practical and educational experiences." She went on to say, "We hope that we have achieved our desired goal in the development of debate and dialogue."

She also directed her speech to the students saying, "You are the emerging generations of hope, delivering to the world the message of dedication, well-spoken reasonable dialogue, and the talent of debate, which we consider to be a catalyst to revive the Arabic language to its golden ages in your hands; you are the real investment to which we are most optimistic."

She pointed out that the Arabic language is the base of knowledge and a necessity for learning, and is able to accommodate modernity and changes objectively at a global level.

She also noted that announcing that the Arabic language is fine will not bring this language to its full potential, saying, "The Arabic language will not rise alone, but rises with those who speak it. We ask of you to join hands to build a present that is better than our past and a future better than our present, to reach a prestigious status where we're proud of our identity and heritage. "

Dr. Hayat also said the lessons to be learnt from the championship, "invites us to move away from the dictatorship of obstacles, silence, the restriction of ideas, and the diminishing of enthusiasm."

Once more, Dr. Hayat directed her speech to students, "Do not lead lives of fear and desperation and don't let your hearts undergo irrational negativity that blinds you from your ambitions and aspirations. Through debate and logical dialogue, and respecting differences, the individual becomes more valuable, more liberated and more dignified to express what he believes in, oppose the views of others or support them though evidence and supportive facts."

HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Vice Chairman of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, took the stage to honor the winners, and to join in announcing the Turkish team as the winner, followed by the Yemeni team as runner-up. The Qatari national team took the fourth place in the tournament after losing to his Jordanian counterpart in a debate to determine the third and fourth places.

Moreover, the committee revealed the best speakers in the completion: receiving first place position of the best 15 speakers was Salsabeel bint Saeed Al Muqbali from Oman, followed by Al Yaqeen bint Khalid Al Ghafari from Oman and Osama Haider Kesheri from Yemen in second place; Dia'a Khalid Al Saidi from Yemen came in fourth; Ghenah Abdullah Al Ilaj from Kuwait in fifth place along with Al Muhallab bin Khalid Al Busaidi from Oman; Karim Hassan Badr from Lebanon in seventh place; Muayed Al Razhy in eighth place; Farah Salahudin Al Sayed from Jordan, Hassan Jamal Saleh from Turkey and Omar Salahudin Al Baba from Lebanon all came in at ninth position; Amna Mansour Al Ali and Abdulwafi bin Ismail from Malaysia in twelfth place, followed by Sharihan Mohammed Dodain from Palestine who took the fourteenth place, and Hassan Mohamed Mohi al-Azzawi from Iraq and Yusuf Ahmed Fadel took the fifteenth place.

During the closing ceremony, HE Engineer Saad Bin Ibrahim Al Mohannadi, Chairman of Qatar Foundation launched "Introduction to the Art of Debating" book, the third publication from QatarDebate, written by Dr. Abdellatif Sellami, Educational Programs Manager at QatarDebate, and reviewed by Dr. Hayat Abdullah Maarafi, Executive Director of QatarDebate.

The book discusses public speaking and debate on a macro-level. Following the inauguration of the book, HE Saad Al Mohannadi honored the book's author, Dr. Abdellatif Sellami in recognition of his effort to enrich the Arabic library. Mr. Salem Al Halbadi, a representative from ConocoPhillips, was also honored as the Gold sponsor of the championship.

During the ceremony, a short documentary film was screened showing the championship's journey from beginning to end, presenting footage from the championship rounds and beautiful moments that will remain dearly in the minds of all participants.

The center seeks through the organization of the championship to document and develop relationships in the areas of Educational and Cultural Affairs amongst schools from the participating countries, and foster a culture of peaceful dialogue which produces knowledge and provides opportunities for rich diversity.

The championship was created through the center's efforts to support and popularize the art of debate and dialogue in Arabic, building foundations and well-established rules of this form art in the Arab World. . The second edition of this championship's framework symbolized the efforts of the center for the dissemination of this form of art and spread awareness among young people of the importance of debate, preparing future leaders with a strong base in the Arabic language.

The participating teams represented these countries: the State of Qatar, Algeria, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Turkey, Tunisia, Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, the United States, Republic of the Sudan, Somalia, Republic of Yemen, Comoros, Djibouti, Singapore, the State of Libya, Oman, State of Palestine, Malaysia, Kingdom of Bahrain.