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HEC Paris, Commercial Bank of Qatar sign MoU for cooperation

Doha, Qatar – 2 March, 2014: HEC Paris School of Management – a leading global business school – and Commercial Bank of Qatar – one of the leading full service banks in Qatar – have signed a Memorandum of Understanding whereby both parties have agreed to collaborate on specific areas of mutual interest.

The areas of cooperation identified in the MoU include exchanges of information on upcoming training sessions, dissemination of information on activities of HEC Paris, and possible participation of Commercial Bank of Qatar’s staff in the training programs of HEC Paris.

Furthermore, interns and recent graduates of HEC Paris may serve as a pool of talent for Commercial Bank of Qatar, and its faculty may be made available as expert resource persons for special events or forums. The MoU also covers cooperation in writing cases as part of the production and publication of case studies to be used by business schools worldwide. Additionally, Commercial Bank of Qatar will consider the creation of an academic chair at HEC Paris in support of the development of specific programs related to Banking and Finance.

The MoU was signed on 3 February 2014 following initial discussions during which both HEC Paris and Commercial Bank of Qatar expressed the desire to cooperate and establish a wider-reaching partnership. They have agreed to meet, consult and cooperate on a regular basis in order to realize the objectives of the MoU.

The MoU also comes on heels of an already successful partnership between HEC Paris and Commercial Bank of Qatar in connection with the second Youth Leadership Acceleration Program which was held on 1 – 3 February 2014.

At the program, 35 talented young Qatari nationals aged 16 to 20 from the very best educational institutions in Qatar participated in a variety of workshops designed to build key leadership skills. Among the topics included in the three-day programs were leadership styles, goal setting, communication and driving change in the context of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Held under the patronage of Qatar Central Bank, the second Youth Leadership Acceleration Program was conducted by senior HEC Paris faculty members Lily Kelly-Radford, Ph.D, and Luke Novelli, Ph.D.

“The signing of the MoU with Commercial Bank of Qatar is a proof of trust and confidence that major Qatar-based organizations have with HEC Paris,” said Professor Laoucine Kerbache, Chief Executive

Officer and Academic Dean of HEC Paris in Qatar. “As HEC Paris seeks to create and develop knowledge-based management content of particular relevance to the region, its economy and firms, it is our desire to partner with leading firms such as the Commercial Bank of Qatar.

“We therefore look forward to a mutually beneficial partnership as we both aim to develop management talents of young business executives in Qatar in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030. This includes of course the staff of Commercial Bank of Qatar,” he added.

For his part, Mr Abdulla Saleh Al Raisi, CEO of Commercial Bank of Qatar expressed his appreciation to HEC Paris for its partnership in accordance with the terms of the MoU. He also expressed confidence that such a partnership will not only stand to benefit both parties but the entire society of Qatar in general.

“Our commitment to delivering world-class quality banking products and services in Qatar hinges upon a better and advanced knowledge of such a vital sector of economy” Mr Al Raisi said. “Through this MoU with HEC Paris, we are assured of access to the best executive education programs from the number one ranked and highly respected business school in the world”.

“At the same time, in fulfillment of our commitment to the further development of human capital in Qatar in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030, our partnership with HEC Paris has certainly strengthened our capability and resolve to assist in the advancement of a knowledge-based economy of the State,” he added.

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Media inquiries:

Salwa Ghorayeb

Account Manager, Action Qatar

Tel: 00974 44361499

Email: salwa.g@actionprgroup.com

Notes to Editors

HEC Paris in Qatar

HEC Paris joined Qatar Foundation in June 2010, bringing world-class Executive Education programs and research activity to Doha and the region. Qatar’s first international EMBA was launched by HEC Paris in February 2011. The HEC Executive MBA (EMBA) is a part-time program which provides executives with a set of fundamental skills to expand their knowledge and leadership capabilities. In addition to the EMBA, HEC Paris provides in Qatar a

Specialized Master Degree in Strategic Business Unit Management. The institution also offers non-degree management programs for executives, in the form of open enrolment programs as well as custom-designed programs for individual companies. The programs and research activities of HEC Paris in Qatar build corporate competitiveness within the global economy and are fully aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030 to support the transformation of Qatar into an advanced, competitive and knowledge-based economy. HEC Paris was ranked number one in the world for Executive Education in 2013 by the influential UK-based Financial Times media group. <http://www.exed.hec.edu/hec-qatar>

HEC Paris

A leader in Europe, HEC Paris specializes in management education and research. HEC Paris offers a full, unique range of courses to the leaders of tomorrow: Masters Degrees, MBA, PhD, Executive MBA and Trium Global Executive MBA. Founded in 1881, HEC Paris has a permanent faculty of 109 professors, 4000 students on its campus (40% of whom are foreign) and over 8500 managers and executives trained in executive education programs each year. HEC Paris was ranked number one in the world for Executive Education in 2013 by the influential UK-based Financial Times media group. <http://www.exed.hec.edu/>

About Commercial Bank

Commercial Bank has total assets of QAR 113 billion as at 31 December 2013. As a full service commercial bank, the Bank offers a full range of corporate, retail and investment banking services as well as owning and operating exclusive Diners Club franchises in Qatar and Oman. The Bank's countrywide network includes 33 full service branches and 154 ATMs.

Profitable every year since incorporation in 1975, continual investment in technology and human capital, together with a strong capital base, provides a solid foundation for continued growth. A successful diversification strategy has expanded Commercial Bank's GCC footprint through strategic partnerships with associated banks, the National Bank of Oman (NBO) in Oman and United Arab Bank (UAB) in the UAE. NBO, the second largest bank in Oman with total assets of OMR 2.9 billion as at 31 December 2013, has 64 branches in Oman and one branch each in Egypt and in Abu Dhabi. UAB is headquartered in Sharjah, with total assets of AED 21.5 billion as at 31 December 2013, and operates 25 branches across the emirates in the UAE. Building on the successful execution of the Bank's expansion strategy to date, Commercial Bank completed the acquisition of a majority stake in Alternatifbank in Turkey in July 2013.

Commercial Bank enjoys strong credit ratings of (A) from Fitch, (A1) from Moody's and (A-) from Standard & Poor's. The Bank is listed on the Qatar Exchange and was the first Qatari bank to list its Global Depository Receipts (GDRs) as well as bonds on the London Stock Exchange. Additionally, Commercial Bank's Swiss Franc bond issuance in December 2010, listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange, was the first public bond issuance by a Qatari bank in Switzerland.

The Bank is dedicated to supporting Qatar's community and social infrastructure through Corporate Social Responsibility programmes and sponsorship of various events. Title sponsorship of the Commercial Bank Qatar Masters and the Grand Prix of Qatar Moto GP reflects the Bank's promotion of excellence in sports and its keen interest in enhancing Qatar's international sporting reputation. To reinforce Qatar's flourishing cultural environment, Commercial Bank is the strategic partner of the Katara Cultural Village. This collaboration symbolises the Bank's commitment to supporting cultural activities in Qatar and making the country a regional arts and cultural hub.

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About Alternatifbank (ABank)

ABank was established in 1991 and has been listed on the Istanbul Stock Exchange since 1995. Commercial Bank became the majority shareholder in ABank in 2013 holding a 74.24% stake, following the acquisition of ABank shares of 70.84% from the Anadolu Group and 3.40% through a public tender offer. Anadolu Group remains a significant shareholder retaining 25% of shares in ABank.

ABank is a mid-size Turkish bank that predominately serves medium-sized companies through a country-wide network of 73 branches in 27 cities (as of 31 December 2013). ABank provides commercial/corporate banking services and products, with a special focus on the growing segment of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. The Bank's main product ranges cover trade finance instruments, working capital finance, cash management, and portfolio management. The Bank has also recently made a strategic decision to re-enter Retail Banking, targeting the "mass affluent segment" in terms of customer profile with tailor made products.

At 31 December 2013, ABank had total assets of TL10.9 billion, total loans stood at TL6.7 billion, customer deposits of TL 4.7 billion and shareholders' equity of TL574 million.

<http://wwweng.abank.com.tr>