



## PRESS RELEASE

### **QATAR'S FIRST NATIONAL IDENTITY SEMINAR CONCLUDES SUCCESSFULLY**

- **ORGANISED BY QATAR HERITAGE AND IDENTITY CENTRE AND SPONSORED BY VODAFONE**

**Doha, 21 October 2014:** Under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of The State of Qatar, Qatar's first National Identity Seminar successfully concluded today at Al Sharq Village with a host of recommendations to reinforce national identity.

The seminar, organized by the Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre and sponsored by Vodafone, was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2014 and saw a prestigious line up of speakers discussing factors impacting Qatar's national identity in addition to major topics pertaining to the significance of conserving a country's national identity.

Dr. Khalid Youssef Al Mulla, Executive Director of Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre said: "I would like to express my gratitude to H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of The State of Qatar, for his patronage of Qatar's first National Identity Seminar. I would also like to thank Vodafone Qatar for their exclusive sponsorship and ongoing support to this event. Through this seminar, our aim was to come up with key findings and recommendations from a host of experts, academics, and key opinion leaders who spoke during the seminar, which all contribute towards highlighting the importance of national identity and we are planning to organise another seminar that further explores the topic of national identity."

Commenting on the success of the event, Mr. Mohammed Al Yami, Director of External Affairs at Vodafone Qatar, said: "At Vodafone Qatar, we aim at reviving and preserving the heritage of our beloved country as we aspire to reinforce the values and understanding of our national identity. Vodafone Qatar has always prioritised matters of key significance to our country's heritage and we are very proud to see such a successful seminar gaining the attention it deserves."



On the impact of media on identity, HE Dr. Saeed bin Tefla, former Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture, said: “The main pillar of identity is language and it must be preserved. Language is vital to our identity, and we have witnessed how our own language has been influenced by the addition of words from other languages and cultures. In such an open world like ours, it is imperative that we develop software and applications that encourage and facilitate the use of Arabic language on open platforms like social media.”

Dr. Fatima Al Suweidy, Deputy Chief of Arabic Language Department at Qatar University, talked about the identity and the Arabic language saying: “Language and identity have always been related, and it is crucial to develop the methodology of teaching our language. Arabic language is facing a challenge be it through poor curricula, lack of motivation among teachers or simply not enough training. Overcoming the challenges facing Arabic language is essential to preserving our identity.”

Mr. Mohammed Ali Abdullah, Expert on Cultural Architecture, gave a speech on identity through architecture in Qatar: “Identity reflects a number of notions that people acquire throughout their lives, and is usually influenced by language, culture, social traditions, and location. Architectural identity is no different, and the identity of architecture in the Gulf region is unique in every shape and form. It is important to emphasize, however, that identity changes through time. Our identity now differs from where it was during at the beginning of the century. Evolution of our identity has been going on for the past four thousand years. An attempt to preserve a ‘pure’ identity based on ethnicity, religion, and culture is unrealistic, as we aim at enriching our culture and others, yet opening up to other cultures.”

The second day of the seminar concluded with a ceremony where participants received honorary certificates.

The Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) aims to build an advanced, knowledge-based economy that is capable of sustaining its own development, in addition to providing a high standard of living for Qatar residents. QNV 2030 defines the long-term outcomes for the country, and provides a framework through which national strategies and plans can be developed.

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**About Vodafone Qatar Q.S.C.**



Vodafone Qatar Q.S.C. ("Vodafone Qatar") is the holder of the Second Public Mobile and Fixed Telecommunications Networks and Services License in the State of Qatar. Vodafone Qatar switched on its mobile network on 1 March 2009 and shortly after started delivering great value to its customers with a range of exciting products and services.

Having built a world class converged IP network, Vodafone launched fibre-based consumer and enterprise fixed-line services commercially in October 2012.

Vodafone's objective is to be one of the most admired brands in Qatar and the Company is committed to providing world class telecommunications infrastructure to support Qatar National Vision 2030. Please visit [www.vodafone.qa](http://www.vodafone.qa) for more details.

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