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المجلس الأعلى للتعليم
SUPREME EDUCATION COUNCIL

Heir Apparent Highlights "Education for a New Era"
Education Reform Building World-Class School System in Qatar

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Doha, Qatar (March 15, 2004) – His Highness the Heir Apparent Tamim bin Hamed bin Khalifa Al-Thani announced today at a forum the forward progress of **Education for a New Era**, the education reform initiative dedicated to building a modern, world-class school system in Qatar.

Part of the larger social, economic and political reforms currently underway, education reform is particularly important to the future growth and development of Qatar.

"The children we teach today will teach *us* tomorrow. The children we lead today will lead *us* tomorrow. We have a duty to them – and to ourselves – to provide the best education possible," said Dr. Sheikha Abdulah Al-Misnad, member of the Supreme Education Council (SEC).

The move toward comprehensive education reform first began in May 2001. After careful study, a November 2002 Emiri decree established the SEC to set education policy and oversee the reform effort. It also established the Evaluation and Education Institutes within the SEC and charged them with implementation.

Unprecedented in scope, **Education for a New Era** is based on four principles: Autonomy, Accountability, Variety and Choice. The goal is to create new learning opportunities for children that allow new schools – guided by performance standards and SEC oversight – to be innovative and independent. Parents can then select from a variety of schooling options, choosing the ones best suited to the needs of their children.

Preserving Qatari culture and values, reforms will be phased in over time in order to build local capacity. Implementation consists of two primary elements: (1) annual student assessments to monitor student and school progress and (2) modern, high quality Independent Schools funded by the government. The first assessment will take place in April-May 2004, followed by the opening of the first 15 Independent Schools in September 2004.

"**Education for a New Era** ensures that our children are learning and our schools are performing at the highest levels possible," said Adel Al-Sayed, Director of the Evaluation Institute. "As our graduates go on to be leaders in business, government and academia, everyone will share in the success of education reform. It is therefore essential that all Qataris support and participate in the reform effort in this crucial implementation stage."

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