

Winter
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Message

'Dialogue' is a word that we are increasingly getting acquainted with, particularly in light of recent regional events. 'Dialogue' is what Qatar has been consistently insisting upon to help resolve the situation. It is in such an atmosphere of differing viewpoints that debate becomes a form of dialogue. Today, it is evident that inculcating professional debating skills, with well-founded strategies and arguments, backed by well-established truths and facts, is key to effectively respond and counter the slander inflicted upon Qatar.

It is here that the QatarDebate Center comes into play, by providing a platform for varying views, facilitating critical thinking through clarifying issues, analyzing arguments, and maintaining composed attitudes amongst the youth of our country. Our training enables them to effectively and maturely discuss their own issues, as well as those of the community, which in turn helps build a cadre of national leaders. The youth are equipped with skills that enable them to deal with differences diplomatically, in the spirit of coexistence and fair play, on a platform of shared values and principles.

Dr. Hayat Abdulla Maarafi
Executive Director

We look forward to your feedback and suggestions on our website

www.qatardebate.org

In Focus

QatarDebate Centre collaborates with State Institutions



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was recently signed between Qatar's Ministry of Justice (Legal and Judicial Studies Center) and QatarDebate Centre at the Centre's headquarters in Education City, for joint cooperation in the fields of training, legal education, legal skills development and the dissemination of legal knowledge. The agreement was signed by Ms. Fatima Abdel Aziz Bilal, Director of the Legal and Judicial Studies Center, and Dr. Hayat Abdulla Maarafi, Executive Director of the QatarDebate Centre. The MoU defined the commitment of both parties to establish cooperation in legal, academic, and professional fields.

QatarDebate Centre also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with 'Hadara' - the Abdullah AbdulGhani Foundation for

Cultural Communication - in the presence of Ms. Buthaina Abdulla AbdulGhani, Chairman of Hadara, Dr. Hayat Abdulla Maarafi, and a number of guests from both institutions and media. The memorandum focused on the common goal for cultural exchange and cooperation in all areas of training and educational activities, to encourage a culture of dialogue and the art of debate, and to shape our future leaders.

In the light of current events that have taken place in the region, the partnership emphasized that sustainable development and the need to train young people in constructive dialogue would be one of the main pillars of the memorandum, in line with the objectives of developing a cadre of qualified nationals in various fields.

Let's Debate!

Motion: Do you think land, sea and air space blockades to put pressure on a country is a crime punishable by law?

FOR

@AhmadQatar

"This blockade is incompatible with international human rights conventions. In a case like this, people and patients, which include helpless children, are affected."

@AalJssim

"Yes, because the closure of land, sea and air fields results in the deaths of innocent people due to hunger or lack of medical care. The Yemen blockade is a clear example where half the people die because of aircraft bombardment, and the rest die of hunger and disease."

@la2q3w4z

"The closure of land, sea and air routes is an outright confiscation of the sovereignty of the targeted country."

AGAINST

@Jaber_AlMulla

"In my opinion, the subject is not suitable for a general debate. Strictly speaking, it is a legal matter, and cannot be subject to personal whims and opinions. It is a discussion that should be confined to specialists in international law."

@muqtadakhan2

"No, because to wage war against a state under certain conditions under international law is permissible. Additionally, the calamity caused by an outright war is far more worse than the blockade."

@Saad_Alasad

"Despite the fact that it is inhumane, it is difficult to consider it as a 'crime punishable by law'. If there was a logical justification for it and there are means for the siege country to carry on with alternative means for travel and the movement of goods it does not violate international laws and conventions."

Visit our Twitter page to participate in upcoming live debates! Contribute your views, for or against the motion, using the @QatarDebate twitter handle and get a chance to be published in the next issue of QatarDebate NEWS.

Learn the Talk

'POI' Points of Information

'POIs' are one of the main components of debate. The process of debate cannot be successful without direct engagement by the participants of the two competing teams. Any one of the speaker's opponents can ask for permission to interject in the midst of their speech. The speaker then can accept or reject the interjection, although it is preferable that the speakers accept at least one POI. POIs are only allowed in the middle of the opponent's speech; they are not permitted before the first or the last minute of a speech, and should not exceed fifteen seconds.

Speakers ask POIs to inquire or seek clarification or to counter the speaker's ideas or arguments of the opposing team. It can be said that this form of engagement can be the most appealing part of a debate, as it gives vitality to the process, encourages critical thinking and ensures the right preparation for quick responses. It is actually the only opportunity for a competing team to interject while their opponents are presenting their case.

Second Elite Academy

QatarDebate's Second Elite Academy of Debates took place with the participation of 25 trainees from 23 countries with the intent of harnessing and developing the ideas of today's youth by supporting them to achieve proficiency in conducting the right kind of dialogue where opinions are expressed without prejudices but with strong evidence and compelling arguments.

The young participants earnestly worked towards learning and implementing the Centre's inspired vision of disseminating the language of dialogue with full conviction and proficiency.

The training was supervised by QatarDebates' elite trainers and graduates. The Elite Academy program included many workshops and events that varied from field visits to some of Qatar's Universities, the National Library, a training workshop in arbitration and debating, concluding in a live debate with Doha Debates and the Qatar Universities' Debating League. The intent was to ensure that the Centre's mission to foster the essentials of good debating would be carried forth to the participants' respective countries, and thereby help set a strong foundation for debate in an organized and consistent manner.

Quick Bite

How to be prepared before Prep Time!

Advice from the Trainer: I once read a Chinese proverb "A single conversation with a wise man is better than ten years of study". Well, I wouldn't go that far, but I definitely agree with the principle. Don't just read or watch something interesting, challenge yourself and your nerdy (yes, I said it!) buddies with debate banter over dinner, tea, a drive to a tournament. Discussions are prep time without the time limit. Push yourself to find answers to those tough devil's advocate questions. You will not only gain a deeper understanding of issues, but you will give depth to your argumentations, and at the same time, you and your teammate will both be on the same wavelength. For example, the "Seat-belt argument" – the one you guys argued over for 2 hours over the extent to which governments can protect you from harming yourself maybe. This cuts your prep time and streamlines your understanding of what that 'seat-belt' argument is actually about.

Debating for Life

Debate refines opinions

"In the light of the present crisis, it is necessary to build rational opinions. Debating allows ways to analyze, refine opinions and present them in a manner that would get attention and impress unbiased listeners. I would like to convey to all young people that these crises are universal and occur across the world and no state can be free of this. In such circumstances, it is our duty to build opinions on a sound and dignified basis that preserves and does not undermine fraternal relations. If you are a supporter or an opponent, you have to strive to establish and present your point of view in a mature manner without impeding the progress of the dialogue."

Turki Abdul Rahman Al-Ghanim
Doha Secondary School for Boys

"Debate is built on a set of rules and regulations to help raise the level of debate and dialogue between the teams, the most important being respecting the opposing party, accepting different views on the same subject and responding in a systematic, civilized manner, free of all methods of defamation, accusations and insults."

Following these norms would be the best way to respond to anyone who opposed Qatar's position

and described it as a state sponsor of terrorism. The methods we learned from debates helped us to respond to those who targeted Qatar, especially on social networking sites, most notably Twitter. The response of the Government of Qatar and its people did not seek escalation. We used civilized dialogue as our weapon to defend our beloved country.

Not resorting to reciprocal response earned us the respect of all countries, including the people of the States that created the embargo, with many of them convinced that they are wrong.

Debate was at the heart of the crisis. His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, did not take any position or political action towards these countries, but he met all their actions through debating through his speeches.

"I appeal to Qataris and the residents Qatar to adopt a positive manner of debating when responding."

Manar Al-Suwaidi
Qatar University graduate, now working with the Ministry of Communications and Transport

Tête-à-tête



Meet QatarDebates' Head of Outreach Program

Abdulrahman Al-Subaie

First, please tell us about the First Elite Academy program and its main objectives.

The Elite Academy program has been around for two years, with four levels of training, including sending in monthly reports to the Centre by the members about the activities carried out, followed by performance evaluations on the variety of methods and ideas, based on which some would be retained or eliminated.

Over the past two years, it was well supported by the Qatar Foundation, our parent organization. The highlight was the momentous meeting of Elite members with Her Excellency Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Vice Chairperson and CEO, QF. It was a significant event which gives us the motivation to persevere by continuing to give our best to the concept and development of debate culture.

How were the members of the Second Elite Academy program nominated and selected?

The Second Elite Academy program was announced on social networking sites as well as the Centre's website with the number of registering students touching 300. Out of these, 25 participants were selected on achieving the terms of participation.

Elite Academy offers a platform for all the members to develop themselves in all aspects, helping the cross-fertilization of ideas and the recognition of contrary views to convey the vision of the State of Qatar and its espousal of 'dialogue' and the role of the Centre in rejecting negatives while promoting positive ideas during and after the crisis.

Debating Debacles

Rick Perry:
"Sorry.
Oops."

In response to a question about his youth, the Indiana Senator Dan Quayle, stated, "I have as much experience in the Congress as Jack Kennedy did when he sought the presidency."

Senator, I served with Jack Kennedy, I knew Jack Kennedy, Jack Kennedy was a friend of mine. Senator, you are no Jack Kennedy.

1988 US VP debate live TV jeer

Unprepared for a republican presidential debate 2011, Texas Senator Rick Perry stated that as president he'd eliminate three government agencies. Only able to remember two, he spent the next 53 seconds uncomfortably trying to remember the third, only saying: "Sorry, Oops."

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senator,_you%27re_no_Jack_Kennedy

QD Book Club

Introduction to the Art of Debate

The third book of QatarDebate Centre's "Introduction to the Art of Debate" was launched at the closing ceremony of the 2nd International Schools Arabic Debating Championship 2014.

Excerpt from the book on Logic: Refutation of logic depends on the consideration of the rationale used by speakers, and examines each statement to test the integrity of the logic in it, basing the refutation on the following: "The lack of clarity and integrity of logical links, and the existence of baseless assumptions, which show intentional bias in the opponent's position, the apparent confusion in the opponent's speech, evasion by changing the subject, and the fallacies appearing in the opponent's speech" (page 89). Through debate, a person learns not to be easily convinced, or accept anything that is rejected by logical thinking.

Download the book (pdf):

<http://www.qatardebate.org/publications-ar/introduction-to-the-art-of-debating-ar>



Must Click!

www.educationworld.com/a_curr/strategy/strategy012.shtml

There's no debate about it! Debates are a great tool for engaging students and livening up classroom curriculum. Using debates in the classroom can help students grasp essential critical thinking and presentation skills. Visit this link to access Education World articles and lessons that provide a great starting point for using debates in the classroom.

Future Pro

Develop your skills in education through the art of debate

If you ask any student or teacher in an educational institution about what the hallmarks of an excellent teacher are, it will be clear to you that they will agree on these characteristics: The ability to convey information in a professional manner; the ability to motivate and encourage students to study; and to attract their attention through general knowledge. Debate, you will see, is an activity that provides all these skills to teachers.

Therefore, most debaters, despite their young age, are able to train new students from different age groups effectively.

A person who wants to be a debater should read and absorb information from all fields. Through continued practice and participation in debating competitions, they acquire the ability to support their opinion with strong evidence, and infer the right points of information for their chosen stand.

QD Headlines



Preparing for our National Day

The Centre has participated in the activities of the Qatar National Day for four years now, and the participation itself is a source of pride as it is the starting point for the training of the Primary stage students in celebration of the homeland.

This year, the Centre's participation differs in form and content, in terms of presenting the most sensitive of topics related to the current situation. Training for the event has become more structured and the number of participating schools has increased relative to previous years.

This year, the Centre explored issues that raised the awareness of the average Qatari child, awakening their pride in their leader and their country. One of the blockade advantages was that we noticed Qatari children's ability to think and to communicate. We also felt very happy to see the young students' maturity when discussing topics beyond their age during the training sessions.

Debate as a tool: This participation helped the Centre to achieve two objectives: "To showcase its activities and events, and training schools that did not qualify this year, enabling them to improve their debating skills from this experience."

Participation at Darb Al-Sai Tent: The competition at the QND ceremony concludes with the qualification of two schools from each category to the finals held at Darb Al-Sai. This comes after a collective training of 20 schools.

National Day topics: The Organizing Committee selected the following topics: "Protectionism to Achieve Self-Sufficiency" for Boys, and "Privatization of Education, Health and Services" for Girls.

'Our Ethics' Event at Qatar Foundation Tent: The idea was launched last year by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al Mised, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, and was announced at Dar Al Sai 2017. QatarDebate Centre presented a panel discussion about the chosen 'ethics' from 9th to 17th December.

Coming Up Next

Make the most of the debating opportunities offered by QatarDebate with our upcoming activities and competitions.

Activity	Date	Month
Debate 101 (Module 1)	15 & 17	January
3rd QUDL	20	
Debate 101 (Module 2)	29 & 31	
Intermediate Judges Training (QSDL)	5 & 7	February
2nd QSDL (Boys)	10	
2nd QSDL (Girls)	17	
4th QUDL	24	
2nd Prep Tournament (Boys)	3	March
2nd Prep Tournament (Girls)	10	
Pre-Nationals Training (QUDL)	25 - 29	
QUDL Nationals	30 & 31	

Club Watch

Al Maha Academy for Boys Winners again!

Through its establishment of the Debate Club under the auspices of the QatarDebate Centre and under the supervision of the Academy's Co-coordinator, Al-Maha Boys Academy has notched up many achievements. It won first and second place in the National Championship at the primary school level held in May 2017 to commemorate Qatar's 2016 National Day. The Academy was Champion of the National Day Championship, after having secured the first and second place in the National Championship at the Primary stage in 2016 too.

Ibn Khaldoun IPSB Hard work pays off!

The 2016-17 EFL Preparatory Boys Qatar Schools Debate League champions, Ibn Khaldoun IPSB has always been a competitor challenging the top schools. The basis of their outstanding performance was a combination of hard work by students and staff, and the great backing from the school's management. With two debaters breaking in to the Open category and being crowned 2016-17 champions, the taste of success is likely going to lay the path for more great accomplishments from this school.

Debaters Today, Leaders Tomorrow



QatarDebate Centre, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, was established in 2008 and is the only national forum for debates in Qatar. The Centre aims to spread the culture of debate in the State of Qatar and neighboring countries. From its inception, the Centre has aimed to provide educational programs for debates in Arabic and English in the State of Qatar, the region, and the Arab world in general. It seeks to spread a culture of debate, and promote open discussion and constructive dialogue, based on the principle of debating as a tool contributing to the development of the personality of the individual and eventually beyond, with the slogan "Today's Debaters, Tomorrow's Leaders."

Our Vision: To develop, support and raise the standard of open discussion and debate among students in Qatar and across the Middle East, thereby shaping the global citizens of today as well as creating the intellectual leaders of tomorrow.

Our Mission: To foster a culture of discussion and debate, and in doing so, shape the global citizens of today as well as create the intellectual leaders of tomorrow.

Our Objective: To provide and promote educational debating activities at the local, regional and international levels for high-school and university students in Qatar, and also to educate young people about communications and critical thinking.

Contact Us

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