



Press Release

Sheikh Faisal Museum celebrates International Museum Day to showcase Qatar heritage to the world

- *Sheikh Faisal Museum commits to reaching out to schools to bring Qatar heritage and culture alive for next generation*
- *Stunning new website allows global audience a glimpse of the museum's exquisite treasures and heritage exhibits alongside sensational vintage car collection*
- *Museum pioneers Travelling Exhibitions to American University of Sharjah and British Museum in London*

Doha, Qatar – Saturday, 18th May 2013: Every year since 1977, International Museum Day is held around the world on May 18 to increase public awareness of the role of museums in the development of society. This year Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim Al Thani Museum in Qatar, one of the country's most fascinating heritage centres housing wide-ranging collections from Islamic cultural artifacts to vintage cars, is joining more than 30,000 museums to celebrate the event in around 100 countries on five continents.

On International Museum Day 2013, ICOM is partnering with the UNESCO ***Memory of the World*** Programme, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2012. ICOM and Memory of the World, which is dedicated to world documentary heritage, share a common vision of safeguarding heritage for the benefit of society and the potential of its digitization for the future.



H.E. Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al Thani, collector and owner of Faisal Bin Qassim Museum, commented: “International Museum Day serves as a reminder of the significant role that museums play by keeping alive the past’s history, culture and traditions for the next generation to learn and draw from, thus enriching and influencing society in a positive way. This year’s theme of Social Change underlines the relevance of museums today.”

An important bridge to the next generation is the brand new Museum website, which presents the museums’ awesome collections and exhibits in mesmerizing detail with stunning photography, fully explained and documented at: <http://www.fbqmuseum.org>. A new logo has added a contemporary touch to this important center for Islamic culture, arts and heritage.

Sheikha Al Anood Bin Faisal Al Thani, Vice-Chair of Board of Trustees of Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim Al Thani Museum commented: “Recently we launched the first ‘Travelling Museum Exhibition in the Middle East, showcasing the rich heritage of the Islamic art of Calligraphy, entitled “The Beauty of Words” at the American University of Sharjah and received a rapturous reception from students, alumni and the University. The aim was to empower and expose students to some of the most distinguished and unique artworks and reflect our mission to encourage cultural exchange and promote history and art.”

Later this year the Museum is donating important pieces to the British Museum in London to exhibit in October as part of the Qatar/ UK Year of Culture 2013. The Museum’s second Travelling Exhibition will thus be on show in the UK’s top tourist attraction that receives over 6 million visitors a year.



Sheikha Al Anood Bin Faisal Al Thani continued: “Opening up the Museum to the next generation of schoolchildren is something planned for this winter, to raise their awareness of history and culture and experience the past. It is an environment that holds so much that students can learn from and we hope to create a programme of interactive School Visits that encourage them to draw and paint their impressions at the Museum.”

One of Qatar’s leading entrepreneurs, Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani is regarded as a key player in promoting the heritage and culture of Qatar. Sheikh Faisal pioneered the establishment of a heritage venue to revive public interest and appreciation of local culture. Today the Museum exposes the beauty of Qatar’s past and the Islamic world to visitors from all over the world.

In 2012, Sheikh Faisal was awarded a new and well-deserved title, “Heritage Personality of the Year”, for noteworthy achievements in heritage preservation organized under the patronage of the League of Arab States.

Notes to Editors:

About Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani Museum:

Established in 1998 in the Qatari fort at Al Samriya Farm, specially built premises some 20km from Doha, the Museum aims to preserve and display the different collections of arts and heritage artifacts accumulated by Sheikh Faisal over the years from around the world. Built of local stone, with traditional turrets the Museum itself is styled on historic Qatari architecture. Sheikh Faisal’s aim is to preserve and promote Islamic heritage for the people of Qatar and its international visitors. The museum has expanded since its opening, with new facilities for research and education purposes as well as state-of-the art facilities for corporate entertainment.

As one of the most important centres of Islamic arts, heritage and culture, the Museum’s displays illustrate and reflect the lives and histories of the Arabs. An impressive collection of



antiquities and art from different periods of Islamic history are on show, such as ceramic art, wood and metal crafts from various Islamic dynasties and eras, textiles and costumes from Morocco to Central Asia, silver and gold jewelry and Qur'anic manuscripts and calligraphy. With over 15,000 pieces from 4 continents, the collections comprise unique exhibits from fossils and dinosaurs, to scriptures and ancient figurines, and from rare coins to traditional Bedouin abodes and the world's largest private collection of armory.

Sheikh Faisal's world class museum focuses on Middle Eastern and Islamic history, reflecting the traditions of the Qatari people in their national heritage and cultural identity – a cultural movement supported by Sheikh Faisal. The museum contains some of the finest and most important examples of Arabic manuscripts and calligraphy, fine arts and weapons, vintage cars, traditional dhow boats and continues to grow as Sheikh Faisal makes selective acquisitions. It is an excellent resource for anyone who seeks a further understanding and knowledge of Islamic civilization and Qatari heritage.

In 2010, the museum was selected by the Ministry of Art, Culture and Heritage as one of Qatar's cultural landmarks as part of the 'Qatar Capital of Culture' activities.