

***In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate***

All Praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, his holy household, and companions.

The Education Forum 2021, through its comprehensive vision and different topics and goals in which it seeks to address and achieve, is by nothing other than the fruit of the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, where all its staff are united and determined to address relevant challenges result from the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

We have ensured that the theme of the Forum for this year: “*Visions and Aspirations ... Beyond Challenges*” stems from the reality of social life in general, the education conditions that the members of the Qatari society have been experiencing, and our belief that no matter the magnitude of the challenges we encounter, we must stand honestly with aspiring vision and daring aspirations to overcome them while looking forward to a brighter future of education regardless of the circumstances or challenges.

In spite of the current conditions related to COVID-19 pandemic, we have demonstrated great resilience when we directly shifted to the online or distance learning, so that learning would not be interrupted and disrupted for our students. Consequently, we have developed solutions and mechanisms to ensure that our students can continue their learning remotely through different technological programs that had been developed even before the outbreak of this pandemic for such circumstances. In addition, we were able in a very short time to overcome all the obstacles that we encountered at the beginning of this crisis, where teaching and learning process has continued properly during the pandemic at a time it has utterly disrupted students’ face-to-face learning.

Over the last two years many achievements have been materialized, including the provision of different education pathways (scientific, literary and technological). In this context, it is worth mentioning that the first technical school for girls was opened to enhance the role of Qatari women as a vital element within the development process, and two additional STEM schools for girls and boys will be opened. The National Scientific Research and Innovation Competition platform was launched in parallel with developing curriculum and learning resources in collaboration with our key partners in the State of Qatar.

To complement all these achievements and in order to find innovative solutions to contemporary education issues, the Forum shall focus on topics that serve and promote education outputs and quality and shall focus on sustainable development to realize our vision that we aspire to and anticipate of in the future by overcoming all challenges that education process has been facing in the State of Qatar.

I would like to conclude by thanking the organizing committees for their efforts. I would like also to extend my best wishes to the participants in their endeavors to address all relevant issues and challenges.

May peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

**Fawziya Abdulaziz Al-Khater**

**Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affair**