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**QUDWA 2017**

## OPENING ADDRESS

**Saturday October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nayhan**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, UAE

Qudra, which means “role models” in Arabic, aims to inspire educators to think creatively and come up with ideas to adapt teaching to the rapid change of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The forum, which is run “for teachers by teachers,” brings together 900 teachers from 70 countries to attend over 90 sessions about the power of innovation; the aim is to empower educators to transform their education systems.

His Highness Sheikh Abdullah opened his address by asking those attendees who are parents to remember the last time they had trouble with technology and asked their children for assistance. “This is an era in which concepts that have been established for thousands of years have faded away and will keep fading away. Who would have thought that letters would fade away? That e-currency would replace paper? That we would order groceries through a small phone?”

The new era that is upon us will also impact education. It will no longer be acceptable to drop your kid off at school in the morning, pick them up in the afternoon and expect that they are educated. Blended learning models, which combine classroom time with online material, will replace traditional schooling. Education will take place at clubs offering valuable experience in the real world. Memorization will be replaced with smart-phone applications, YouTube channels and online programs such as the Khan Academy.

“How will they learn? And what will they learn?” H.H. Sheikh Abdullah asked. “Our children today know and understand more than we do and more than we did at their age. With all these enormous changes happening around us, my question is what is the role of the teacher?”

Technology will replace the teacher as a disseminator of information; lectures will be replaced with interactive, collaborative forums. Instead teachers will become mentors who provide students with group activities that help them develop their skills and ways of thinking.





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“Children can look up every piece of information,” H.H. Sheikh Abdullah said. “As for the curriculum, what we have in our hands is no longer usable. And this is not just the UAE. Only a few countries have gotten rid of the old curriculums and started involving students in planning so that those passionate about history will study it differently than those who love math.”

The goal of the new systems changing the world is to teach them how to think, search and improvise and to help them change their societies and thus the world.

“I have not come here to talk about the future of education,” H.H. Sheikh Abdullah said. “You are the experts on education. But as a father, I can tell you that the world outside the school walls has expanded a great deal. In light of this, let us understand this generation and live up to our roles as mentors of the 21st century.”

