



Press Release

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ASPIRE AND QAAF SIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENT

The Two Renowned Bodies work for a Better Future for Qatar Athletics

Friday, February 26th, 2010, Doha, Qatar: ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence and the Qatar Association of Athletics Federation (QAAF) have signed a cooperation agreement which aims to ensure a bright future for Qatar athletics. The core objective of the agreement is to produce elite athletes able to represent Qatar, with success, at major international and intercontinental athletics events and meetings.

QAAF's most talented young athletes are to become student-athletes at ASPIRE Academy, where they will receive both their training and education. Here, they will be able to take advantage of ASPIRE's world-class sports science facilities, well-equipped laboratories and health center.

While ASPIRE will be responsible for all staffing, facility, equipment and operating costs associated with the program, QAAF will have technical control of the athletes and coaches, when it comes to athletics instruction, training and competition planning, performance monitoring, and all other aspects of the athlete's sports development.

QAAF will also be responsible for the selection of athletes and coaches to federation cadet, youth, junior and senior national teams and training camps, as well as all costs associated with these programs and international competitions, including financial grants awarded to national team members for the purpose of continued training.

Commenting on the agreement, ASPIRE Director General(Acting), Tariq Abdulaziz AL-Naama said: "This agreement between QAAF and ASPIRE reflects our collective recognition of the critical importance for all stakeholders to collaborate in the best interests of Qatari sport. It also signifies the next phase of sports development in Qatar, whereby ASPIRE and its partner sports federations (in this case QAAF), will build upon our impressive sports facility infrastructure to create programs and an environment of cooperation which will be in the best interests of Qatar's athletes. We firmly believe that with a commitment to the principles of cooperation, fairness, transparency and a focus on creating an environment of excellence, our athletes will achieve unprecedented success."

Mr. Abdulla AlZaini, QAAF President, warmly welcomed the cooperation agreement with ASPIRE, saying: "We, at QAAF, have always looked on ASPIRE Academy as a key partner in developing sports in general, and athletics in particular. We have worked together and been partners in many events for a long time. It is now time to take this crucial step to work together more formally, based on this agreement."

END

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Notes to Editors:

Created in 2004, the ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence in Doha has the dual aims of identifying and transforming promising student athletes into world-renowned champions across a wide range of sports and to act as a beacon to draw sporting culture into the centre of life in Qatar and the surrounding region.

The Academy is distinguished by a philosophy which aims to develop the student as a whole, providing them with full academic, social and sporting development.

Unrivalled facilities, housed in and around the world's largest purpose built indoor sports dome, ensure the Academy's reputation as one of the foremost sporting and educational institutions in the entire international community, enticing an ever-increasing number of visitors and users, from sporting legends to global political leaders.

Every aspect of the development of elite athletes is catered for by one indoor and seven outdoor football pitches, athletics tracks, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, diving pool, combat arenas, gymnastics arena, specially fitness weight rooms, lecture halls, dormitories to accommodate what will eventually become 1,000 students, a medical centre and many more facilities.

Launched in 2007, the ASPIRE Football Dreams project has annually tests over 600.000 young footballers from all over the world including Asia, South America and Africa as part of the largest ever talent search within the sport.

The ASPIRE ACTIVE initiative is a community engagement program spread across the country ensuring that thousands of the nation's residents have accessible and advanced health and fitness activities as routine aspects of their lives. Each social group is catered for by tailor-made classes and programs.