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# WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE IN QATAR

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## PRESS RELEASE

### International expert in prenatal medicine, Dr. Roberto Romero, gives the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Hamad Bin Khalifa Lecture at WCMC-Q

Doha, 25 February: "No period in an individual's life is as crucial in determining his or her future health and propensity to disease as the perinatal period," Dr. Roberto Romero, one of the world's leading experts in modern obstetrics, explained tonight in an address to Qatari dignitaries, medical students and members of the medical community in Qatar gathered at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q).

Dr. Roberto Romero, chief of the Perinatology Research Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, a division of the National Institutes of Health, delivered the second annual Hamad Bin Khalifa Lecture, entitled "The Child is the Father of Man", today at WCMC-Q.

"Several epidemiological, animal and clinical studies indicate that insults during the earliest stages of life can profoundly affect our health as adults. This realisation goes beyond the obvious examples of genetic or congenital diseases. Intrauterine malnutrition, for example, is a significant risk factor for the development of chronic hypertension, diabetes, stroke and death from coronary artery disease in adults," Dr. Romero said.

At the turn of the century, JW Ballantyne said that the goals of prenatal care should be to prevent fits, and treat maternal diseases. "Perinatologists can look back with satisfaction on the progress they have made in each of these areas, but new challenges lie ahead," added Romero. "It is now our task to apply the techniques of developmental biology and perinatology, for this is the only effective way to prevent and treat these disorders."

An acknowledged international expert in preterm labor and conditions affecting pregnancy, in recent years, Dr. Romero has been at the forefront of those applying molecular biology and genomics to the study of maternal-fetal medicine.

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The Hamad Bin Khalifa Lecture is named in honor of His Highness the Emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani. Established by WCMC-Q in cooperation with Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, the Lecture is delivered annually in Qatar by a distinguished physician or scientist who is a leader in the field of biomedical research, in recognition of His Highness' support of Weill Cornell.

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Established in partnership with Qatar Foundation, WCMC-Q** is part of the Weill Medical College of Cornell University, the first American institution to offer its M.D. degree overseas. WCMC-Q offers a complete and integrated educational program, comprising the two-year Pre-medical Program, followed by the four-year Medical Program, with teaching by Cornell faculty. There are separate admission processes for each Program, guided by the standards of admission in use at Cornell University in Ithaca, and its Medical College in New York City.

Website: [www.qatar-med.cornell.edu](http://www.qatar-med.cornell.edu)

**Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development** is a private, nonprofit, chartered organization founded in 1995 aiming to develop and utilize human potential through a network of centers and campuses. In 1997 the Foundation set out on a strategic plan to create an Education City that is composed of a number of research centers, branch campuses of world-class educational institutions and a Science Park that acts as an incubator for research, responds to the immediate needs of industry and anticipates future necessities for development. In October 2003, Education City was officially inaugurated and it is now home to branches of some of the world's leading universities and research centers.

Website: [www.qf.org.qa](http://www.qf.org.qa)