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## **A Step Towards Promoting the Arabic Language and Culture in South Africa**

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**Pretoria, South Africa** – The International Knowledge Foundation – South Africa has announced a pioneering initiative to establish the first Arabic Language and Culture Centre in the capital, Pretoria. This centre aims to be a hub for Arabic language education and cultural exchange, open to all South African residents regardless of race, religion, or background.

### **Historical Background**

The Arabic language first arrived in South Africa in 1654 with Muslim immigrants from various parts of the world. Despite more than three centuries passing since then, Arabic remains largely unfamiliar to the general South African population. Therefore, it has become essential to establish a dedicated centre to promote the Arabic language and raise cultural awareness.

Currently, South Africa hosts 226 foreign embassies and consulates, many of which operate cultural centres representing their respective nations, including French, Korean, Turkish, Iranian, and Brazilian institutions. However, Pretoria lacks a dedicated centre for Arabic language and culture—an issue this project aims to address.

### **Objectives and Vision**

The Arabic Language and Culture Centre seeks to provide a structured environment for learning Arabic and exploring its rich cultural heritage. The Centre's main objectives include:

- Offering Arabic language courses from beginner to advanced levels.
- Promoting cultural understanding and awareness of Arab traditions and customs.
- Conducting academic research on Arabic language teaching methodologies.
- Organizing training programs for teachers in South African schools and universities.
- Hosting cultural events and exhibitions showcasing Arabic history, literature, and civilization.

## **Centre Facilities**

The Arabic Language and Culture Centre will be housed in a multifunctional, four-story complex, including:

- **The Arabic Market** – A space dedicated to showcasing Arab culture through food, crafts, and traditional goods.
- **The Arabic Language and Culture Centre** – A dedicated learning space equipped with classrooms, libraries, and digital resources.
- **Student Accommodation** – Housing facilities for students enrolled in intensive language programs.
- **Staff Residence** – Accommodation for instructors and administrative personnel.

## **Academic Curriculum**

The Centre will offer a structured Arabic language program divided into three levels:

- **Beginner Level (3 months):** Learning the Arabic alphabet, correct pronunciation, basic dialogues, and an introduction to Arabic literature and culture.
- **Intermediate Level (4 months):** Advanced study of grammar and morphology, along with the analysis of literary and cultural texts.
- **Advanced Level (4 months):** Mastery of Arabic language skills, preparing students for higher education at Arabic-speaking universities.

## **Target Audience**

The Centre will welcome all individuals interested in learning Arabic, with a focus on:

- High school graduates who wish to study Arabic before enrolling in university.

- University students seeking to acquire Arabic language skills alongside their higher education studies.
- Researchers and professionals interested in Arabic language and culture.

### **Budget and Estimated Costs**

The total estimated cost of the project is between **8 million USD and 9 million USD**, covering:

- Land acquisition and site development.
- Hiring teachers and administrative staff.
- Purchasing educational materials and research resources.
- Organizing cultural events and language programs.

### **Project Team**

The project will be implemented by a team of over 20 specialists, including:

- **Secretary General of the Centre**
- **Deputy Secretary General for Academic Affairs**
- **Three Arabic language education specialists**
- **Media advisors and marketing officials**
- **Security and maintenance teams**

### **A Step Towards Cultural Understanding**

The Arabic Language and Culture Centre in Pretoria is a ground breaking initiative that will enhance cultural ties and linguistic understanding in South Africa. By providing a platform for Arabic language learning and cultural engagement, the Centre will contribute to building a more diverse and culturally aware society.

With the launch of this project, the International Knowledge Foundation – South Africa is taking a significant step toward fostering cultural diversity, ensuring that Arabic language education and heritage are accessible to all. The initiative is set to commence as soon as possible, marking a milestone in promoting cultural and educational identity in the country.