

Oct.31, 2006

## DOHA DECLARATION

### THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NEW OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES DOHA, QATAR 29 OCTOBER -1 NOVEMBER 2006

#### **Building Capacity for Democracy, Peace and Social Progress**

#### **Introduction**

PP1 We, the ministers and other representatives of Governments around the world gathered at the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies at Doha, Qatar, on 29 October – 1 November 2006, are determined to adhere to the universal relevance of democratic values, principles and standards, to work together to consolidate and strengthen democratic institutions, and to enhance the linkages between democracy, peace and social progress in the ongoing international dialogue on development,

#### **Preamble and Principles**

PP2 Recognizing that a large number of the States in the world are now participating in the International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies and are working together with a host of parliamentarians, international organizations and a large number of non-governmental organizations active in the field of democracy from around the world,

PP3 Recalling, inter alia, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

PP4 Recalling also the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the

Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Millennium Declaration,

PP5 Emphasizing that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights without distinctions of any kind,

PP6 Renewing our conviction that democracy, sustainable development, peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and that democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives,

PP7 Committed to advancing human welfare, freedom and progress everywhere, as well as to encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue, and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples,

PP8 Reaffirming that strict adherence to the principle of non-discrimination, including in respect to persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities is one of the pivotal elements of democracy,

PP9 Acknowledging the rich diversity of the world, and that all cultures and civilizations contribute to the enrichment of humankind and the importance of respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity throughout the world in order to promote international peace and security,

PP10 Acknowledging further that interfaith dialogue and cooperation plays a vital role in promoting democracy,

PP11 Committed also to act in the spirit of universally recognized standards of human rights with the purpose of strengthening dialogue and cooperation between states, peoples and individuals, as well as a culture of peace,

PP12 Reaffirming our faith in, and support to, the United Nations and our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of international law, which are indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, and reiterate our determination to foster strict respect for them, and in this regard, commending the Secretary-General and the United Nations System for their continuous efforts to consolidate democracy,

PP13 Considering the need to develop home-grown democratic reforms to be pursued taking into account the distinctive cultures and traditions of each society while conforming with the spirit and principles of relevant international instruments,

PP14 Recognizing the richness and diversity of democratic political systems and models of free and fair electoral processes in the world, based on national and regional particularities and various backgrounds,

PP15 Reaffirming the right of peoples to determine methods and to establish institutions regarding free and fair electoral processes and, consequently, that there is no single model of democracy or of democratic institutions and that States should ensure all the necessary mechanisms and means to facilitate full and effective participation in those processes,

PP16 Sharing the resolve to jointly cooperate to discourage and resist the threat to democracy posed by the overthrow of constitutionally elected governments,

PP17 Reaffirming the respect for sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs as provided in the Charter of the United Nations,

PP18 Unequivocally condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations,

PP19 Noting with satisfaction the momentum towards democratic governance in various countries of the Middle East, while concerned that continuing inter-state armed conflicts and violence have jeopardized the prospects for a Middle East peace and further democratization,

PP20 Reaffirming that the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination is essential to peace, democracy and social justice,

PP21 Condemning foreign occupation, all forms of abduction, targeted killings and destruction of civilian infrastructures,

PP22 Cognizant that the concept and parameters of democracy encompass economic, social, cultural as well as political dimensions and that an important aspect of development policy is the relationship between economic and social development on the one hand and democracy, human rights and responsive governance on the other,

**OP1** Reaffirms that the International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies<sup>\*</sup> over the past eighteen years since 1988, have enhanced the international dialogue on concepts and principles of democracy and strengthened international cooperation among new and restored democracies with a view to consolidating the integration of democracy, peace and development:

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\* o The first Conference in Manila, the Philippines in 1988;  
o The second Conference in Managua, Nicaragua in 1994;  
o The third Conference in Bucharest, Romania in 1997;  
o The fourth Conference in Cotonou, Benin in 2000;  
o The fifth Conference in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2003;

**OP2** Reaffirms also the numerous recommendations emanating from the International Conferences on New or Restored Democracies, including, inter alia, those that address structural vulnerabilities of democracy, the fundamentals of good governance, the creation of a suitable political culture, the protection of human rights, the relationship between democracy, peace and development, enhancing the rule of law, improving accountability and transparency in democratic structures of government, the establishment of free and independent media, etc.,

**OP3** Encourages the promotion of a democratic culture, the building of institutions for democracy, the affirmation of common principles and interests in the pursuit of democratization, among others, necessitate the development of core skills and capabilities in order to identify and address the challenges confronting new and restored democracies,

**OP4** Recognizes the necessity of creating an enabling environment which requires the consolidation and strengthening of democratic institutions, supporting the adherence to common democratic values, principles and standards and the development of appropriate policy and legal frameworks,

**OP5** Notes with satisfaction that to date, as a result of the deliberations since 1988, we have witnessed greater awareness of the issues related to the promotion of democracy, the advance in the promotion of the topic in the context of peace and development, the ever-increasing recognition of the importance of supporting new or restored democracies and bringing positive changes in the democracy realm,

**OP6** Stresses that the need for systematic implementation of ICNRD's recommendations requires the establishment of follow-up steps,

**OP7** The Conference requests the Chair of ICNRD-6 to take the necessary measures to guarantee appropriate implementation and follow up of the recommendations of the ICNRD Conferences,

a- The Chair will be assisted by an Advisory Board composed of 8 members:

(i) Five governmental representatives nominated on the basis of geographical representation in accordance with United Nations practice, taking into consideration that one of the five representatives will be a representative of the previous Chair of the ICNRD,

(ii) One participant from the ICNRD-6 Parliamentary Forum,

(iii) One participant from the ICNRD-6 Civil Society Forum,

(iv) One representative from the United Nations,

b- The Advisory Board will provide assistance to the Chair on the most effective and practical ways and means to follow up on ICNRD recommendations,

c- The Advisory Board will hold meetings on an annual basis at such time and duration as it determines,

d- An annual meeting of the ICNRD will be convened during the annual United Nations General Assembly sessions in New York,

e- A nucleus Secretariat will be established to assist the Chair,

f- The Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations in New York will liaise with the Chair of the Conference,

g- The host country of ICNRD-6 will be responsible for all financial obligations to this effect for a three year period,

h- Contributions from international donors are welcome,

**OP 8** The Chair of the ICNRD-6 in close consultation with the Advisory Board will submit a progress report to the ICNRD-7 on the effectiveness of the recently established Secretariat,

**OP 9** Stresses the importance of more democratic decision - making at the global level,

**OP 10** Encourages consultation and increased cooperation between the Community of Democracies and ICNRD to facilitate technical cooperation, including exchange of experiences about specific issues of common interest,

**OP11** Welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Democracy Fund by the Secretary General as well as the support provided to it by Member States and civil society organizations and invites all relevant actors to make use of this strategic and flexible new instrument to further democracy-building efforts,

**OP12** Recognizes that peace building constitutes an important dimension of democracy building and appeals to Member States to contribute to the Peace Building Fund established by the United Nations Secretary General,

### **Cooperation with the United Nations System**

**OP13** Notes with satisfaction the commendable collaboration between the United Nations and the Movement of the ICNRD with respect to promoting and consolidating new and restored democracies and urges the United Nations System to continue exerting efforts to provide the necessary technical assistance to member countries upon request. In this regard, technical cooperation and substantive support services may be in the form of specialized personnel and expert advice, fellowships, documentation, training, materials and statistical data.

**OP14** The host government of the Conference shall transmit instruments adopted by the Conference, including the Declaration to the United Nations General Assembly under the appropriate agenda item and initiate necessary actions for the continued support of the United Nations.