

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**KeyNote Speech**

**By**

**H.E Dr. Ghalia Bint Mohammed Al-Thani  
Chairperson, National Health Authority  
State of Qatar**

**At**

**The Follow up Meeting on the Outcome of the 26<sup>th</sup>  
Special Session  
Implementation of the Declaration of  
Commitment on HIV/AIDS  
31 May – 2 June 2006**

الوفد الدائم لدولة قطر لدى الأمم المتحدة

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**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is an honour and a privilege for me to be here today to address what I consider to be one of the most paramount issues facing our world today, namely, the HIV/AIDS heavy burden afflicted upon the world, particularly the developing and the least developed countries.

At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Government and people of the State of Qatar, to express our deep appreciation to the United Nations system and to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS for the lead and critical role they have played to reinforce and buttress an expanded response to HIV/AIDS. The State of Qatar wholeheartedly supports their commendable efforts and mandate.

As you all know, to date more than 65 million people have been infected with HIV. Every minute, every hour and every day, more and more are infected with HIV. More than one child is dying every minute of AIDS. Despite the world combined efforts, the global AIDS problem is getting worse, not better. This single fatal virus is touching every one unlike any other disease. It destroys families and intrudes on the most intimate relations between people. It spreads silently; it kills; it tears the fabric of society. AIDS threatens the security and stability of nations. It shrinks economies and threatens people in their most productive years. It is not just a public health matter. It is rather an educational, economic, political and human rights issue. Hence, we need to work together under the auspices of the United Nations in a vigorous and accelerated effort to address this challenge as it is the most critical socio-economic development issue of our time.

By reaffirming their commitment to implement fully the UN Declaration on HIV/AIDS Global Crisis – Global Action adopted by the UN General Assembly, Heads of States and Governments represented in this Review are more convinced than before that greater action should be undertaken. This is a shared concern that necessitates a shared vision, collective engagements and partnership, bold actions and a comprehensive response.

We are in great need to reevaluate and perhaps redesign our strategy on AIDS. The International Community should increase the flow of funds to the effected countries which in turn should give due concern to the issue of

prevention and act forcefully without any further delay. Hence, we need to work together under the auspices of the United Nations in a vigorous and accelerated effort to address this challenge.

**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Despite the fact that the number of HIV/AIDS patients in Qatar is relatively small, yet, we have been fully aware and cautious of this fatal disease. HIV is well established and is considered an endemic in my country. The total number of cases diagnosed is 212 up to the end of 2005. The number of Qatari's who died with HIV/AIDS is 48 (M 28, F 20). In collaboration with WHO, an in-depth study on the situation at the national level has been conducted. Significant support has been provided by both the public and private sectors. Consultants from WHO and UNDP as well as health planners discussed the matter and suggested a national frame of action. The universal precautions in health care settings have been strictly applied to prevent transmission of HIV infection and to protect health care providers. Information and education activities have been performed to create public awareness on this epidemic. Social workers, teachers, religious people and students have been involved in these campaigns. Workshops, lectures, newspaper articles and pamphlets in addition to TV and Radio programs have been utilized. A national AIDS committee is being set up to develop a national strategy, coordinate action and give counsel and advice to the concerned bodies, as well as implementing the national frame of action.

**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In closing, we might feel frustrated because of the worsening statistics that emerge year after year, because it is a testimony to the fact that we are talking about the problem and are doing very little about the solution. However, the challenge is huge and the issue requires effective world partnership capable of building a united front against the epidemic. Let's be more committed to this Declaration. We certainly know what needs to be done. We must act – NOW. Lets us move ahead as we have no time to waste.

Thank you.