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Statement

By

**His Highness Sheikh
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Before

**the High-Level Plenary Meeting
of the General Assembly**

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Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations
New York



In the Name of God Most Compassionate Most Merciful

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary General,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Five years ago, in this very hall, the heads of states and governments adopted the Millennium declaration. It was a historic moment where the leaders of the world got together at the turn of the century to put forth a new vision in response to the changing reality. It is a vision that can strengthen the UN system and give it new momentum.

Today, we meet again to search for means to activate the agreements that we have previously concluded. Allow me on this occasion to congratulate Mr. Jan Eliasson on his election to the presidency of the current session of the General Assembly. I wish him and this high level meeting every success. I would also like to thank co-President Jean Ping for steering the proceedings of the past session and for his welcome contribution to the preparations for this summit.

I want to express my appreciation to his Excellency Secretary General Kofi Annan for the responsibility he shoulders in running the affairs of the international organization. I commend him for his efforts to prepare a comprehensive report on the achievement of security, development, and human rights for all.

Mr. President,

The United Nations has accomplishments that cannot be underestimated. Moreover, it has been up against difficulties that cannot be ignored. While we may hold divergent views over evaluating the outcomes of the United Nations' efforts, we do not question the need for it, nor the imperative to support its organs so that we can meet the challenges that the international community is facing.

We agree with the findings of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. In order to rise to the challenges of the 21st century we must develop a new concept for collective security. This concept should allow us to define responsibilities, design strategies accordingly, and draw up roles for institutions to increase their efficiency and effectiveness.

We also agree with the proposal of the Secretary General to accord an equal share of attention to development, security and human rights, which are the three primary purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. We cannot pursue one at the expense of the two others.

It is high time that we grant development the attention it deserves. We cannot address it as if it were of a lesser priority. Together with the two other objectives of security and respect for human rights, it should be accorded a priority status. Achieving security and preserving the integrity of human rights cannot be meaningfully pursued while vast regions of the world are deprived of the minimum requirements for life in dignity.

It therefore is not a coincidence that the most impoverished regions are the ones suffering the most protracted regional conflicts, where human rights are often trampled and threatened. While issues pertaining to security and human rights are among the international concerns that ought not be underestimated, development is a pivotal objective that deserves to be given the utmost importance.

Mr. President,

The state of Qatar endorses the outcomes of the Millennium Summit. We believe that the development goals are primary objectives that must be realized in order to meet the challenge of extreme poverty and address its painful repercussions, to achieve gender equality, advance education, and preserve the environment. We consider all of the above basic rights consecrated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

The realization of the MDG's, requires the creation of the necessary conditions at the national and international levels in order to mobilize the necessary resources needed for that purpose. In this regard, the Plan of Implementation defined in the outcomes of the Johannesburg conference remains the main guideline for the efforts of financing for development. Furthermore, the Monterey consensus provided the tools needed to translate this plan into tangible results. Together with the Millennium Declaration, these two reference documents constitute an integrated plan on how the financing components of the development package can advance international development efforts.

Developing countries have actually begun assuming more responsibilities by drawing up their own development strategies. They however are still facing a major problem, namely the lack of adequate financial resource flows to assist them in realizing the Millennium as well as other previously agreed international goals.

It is therefore important to increase these flows and resources, and to honor the minimum level of commitments that developed countries have previously agreed to, provided that such measures are pursued while allowing the United Nations to play the role entrusted to it.

We in the state of Qatar believe that the international financing system must accommodate the humanitarian concerns of affected countries by providing more grants, and launching more official debt cancellation initiatives as a relief measure to LDC's and heavily indebted countries. We also stress the importance of building a global multilateral trading system, committed to the principles of equality, and founded on a standard rule based-scheme that applies equally to all.

In this context, we welcome the decision adopted by the General Council of the WTO on August 4, 2004 calling for the full implementation of the Doha Ministerial Declaration including the development related aspects thereof. We also stress the need to conclude the Doha Round for Multilateral Trade negotiations by 2006.

Mr. President,

The kind of development we seek depends on promoting good governance based on the respect for the rule of law and providing access for popular participation, which is a process made possible by the spread of democracy. Thanks to democracy, strong institutions can be established to hold incumbents responsible and accountable. Under such systems, the status of an impartial judiciary can be preserved. Democracy also provides the political and cultural conditions that contribute to development. In this context, the state of Qatar supports the reference to democracy in the paper submitted by the President of the General Assembly. It also welcomes the establishment of a democracy fund at the United Nations and believes that the establishment of this fund will advance and promote development. This accords fully with the convictions of the State of Qatar in enhancing popular participation and strengthening democratic processes. Hence, Qatar will contribute the sum of Ten Millions Dollars to support this fund in the hope that its establishment will truly be a practical steps towards achieving the welfare of peoples.

Mr. President,

The threats that are haunting the international community today, and the challenges it must rise to in the upcoming decades are not solely confined to the maintenance of international peace and security. They include many other risks namely poverty, epidemics and contagious diseases, environmental degradation, different manifestations of violence, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, transnational organized crime and the inability to reap the fruits of development.

Repelling such threats individually and unilaterally is no longer feasible. Experience has shown-as has the case been with the issue of terrorism- that rising up to the challenge requires collective efforts and close international cooperation based on a commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law. The globalized interconnected world in which we live today requires that we settle for nothing less.

Mr. President,

As I turn to the role of the United Nations, it is extremely important to further cooperation among its member states to reaffirm its identity as an expression of humanity's aspirations for peaceful coexistence among nations and as the forum that unites them in the pursuit of their common interests. Member states must also strengthen its organs to enable the organization to face up to present and future challenges, and allow it to respond positively to the changing international environment.

This summit provides member states with the opportunity to consult on the means to advance the role of the United Nations. In conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law, the state of Qatar believes that the role of the United Nations will be strengthened exponentially as multilateralism increasingly becomes the means of addressing the international problems that lie ahead.

Terrorism represents one such problem. We must develop a collective response to this threat. In this context, Qatar reaffirms its denunciation of terrorism in all its manifestations and is determined to continue to coordinate international efforts to combat this scourge. To this end, Qatar had either participated in the global and regional conferences dedicated to address this scourge or provided the necessary financial and human resources needed for that purpose.

We stand ready to join the much sought international convention to combat terrorism, which we hope will be drafted with due regard given to the multilateral perspective. I should not fail to stress the importance of arriving at a definition of the concept of terrorism, one that will allow the international community to distinguish between a despicable criminal act and peoples' right to resist occupation by armed struggle.

Mr. President,

There is a set of legally binding rules and provisions in the field of human rights that ought to be implemented. We have also recently witnessed the emergence of organizations dedicated to human rights at the national, regional and international levels. In addition, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is playing an extremely important role in this field.

Some of these organizations were recently accused of selectivity and double standards, and of promoting western cultural values in furthering political and civil rights to the detriment of social, economic and cultural rights. We therefore find it extremely important to affirm that the universality of human rights should not compromise the legitimate diversity among the different cultures and civilizations. This diversity should be accorded the respect it duly deserves.

We appreciate the attention accorded by Secretary General to the question of human rights, which was reflected in his proposal to upgrade the Commission on Human Rights into a full-fledged, but smaller standing council. Members of this council are to be directly elected by a two-thirds majority of the members of the GA. This procedure would exclude member states whose record in compliance with acceptable norms of human rights is less than satisfactory. While we value this proposal, we nevertheless fear that the limited smaller standing council is not representative of the wider membership of the international organization and as such may not be able to provide the required solutions to human rights questions. We therefore believe that the proposal should be further studied through intergovernmental negotiations that could ultimately lead to a consensus decision on establishing a subsidiary organ of the GA with an open membership in order to dispel any suspicion of exclusivist approaches, and allow its subsidiary organs to function efficiently.

Mr. President,

The reform of the Security Council and expansion of its membership has become an integral part of activating and invigorating the role of the United Nations itself. We are therefore looking forward to more deliberations among the member states of our international organization on this subject with a view to discussing the Council's working methods and its relations with other primary organs of the organization, namely the Economic and Social Council. We recall the need to enhance ECOSOC's functions, and provide it with the resources needed for the discharge of its mandate.

We also support the reform of the Secretariat to allow it to perform its functions with transparency. Monitoring and accountability mechanisms must be put in place to raise the professional competence of its international civil servants. In this context, I believe we should continue to examine with diligence the issues at hand at the intergovernmental level until we develop the consensus that would ultimately serve the interests of the Organization.

Mr. President,

Two years ago, the Secretary General said that the United Nations stood at a crossroads between multilateralism and unilateralism. Qatar has opted for promoting multilateralism and lived by this choice. A case in point was the second South Summit that was held in Doha last June, which reaffirmed the importance of promoting multi faceted international cooperation between the South and the North.

Qatar would like to stress once again its desire to be part of the international community's pursuit of multilateralism. We believe that the outcome of this meeting will contribute to widening the horizons of the new generations. We need a new United Nations, which can celebrate its sixtieth anniversary and concomitantly work to build a world that lives in peace and enjoys security and prosperity.

Thank you for your attention

May God's Peace, Mercy and Blessings be upon you.