



**Eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 18)
and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties
serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 8)
Doha, 4 December 2012**

**Opening address at the high-level segment by
Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar
H.H. Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser, Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation
H.H. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait
H.H. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Heir Apparent of the State of Qatar
H.E. Mr. BAN Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations
Most honourable Heads of State and/or Government
H.E. Mr. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, President of COP 18/CMP 8
Honourable ministers
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and gentlemen,

“السلام عليكم”.

Welcome to the opening of the high-level segment of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.

Allow me once again to express my sincere thanks to the Government and the people of Qatar, and the Qatar Foundation, for welcoming us and for hosting the conference in this most excellent facility and this beautiful city.
“يشرفنا وجودنا معكم هنا اليوم”.

Honourable ministers, when you approached the convention centre, I am sure you noticed the unique look of this facility. The front of the building is built to resemble a Sidra tree, an iconic symbol of Qatar. With branches that provide shade, fruit and flowers that nourish and leaves that heal, the Sidra tree helped the Qatari people thrive in the desert.

Traditionally, travellers and scholars would gather in the shade of the Sidra tree to hold conference. Over many generations, the Sidra came to symbolize perseverance, solidarity, and determination.

Over the course of the past eight days – with perseverance, your delegates have addressed the difficult issues faced by this conference. Much progress has been made, but now it is time for you to bring solidarity and determination.

The eyes of the world are upon us. The urgency of the science is upon us. The need for decisive ambition is upon us.

The outcomes of this conference must change the face of long-term global adaptation and mitigation responses and chart the course of the coming years. Doha needs to ensure that:

- There is agreement on an amendment to the Kyoto Protocol;
- There is a clear path forward on climate finance;
- There is an effective review of the long-term goal of staying below 2 °C;
- There is an urgent response to the widening emissions gap; and
- There is a firm foundation laid for a long-term framework that is applicable to all, equitably instituted and responsive to science.

Excellencies, coming from all corners of the world, you gather today under the Sidra tree. Your unequivocal guidance is needed to transform this symbol of perseverance, solidarity and determination into authoritative action.

This will happen only if you work with purposeful perseverance, show true solidarity and demonstrate determination to act with ambition and urgency. Present and future generations are counting on you.

“شكرا. والسلام عليكم”.
