

Unofficial Translation

**The Address of His Highness
Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani
Amir of the State of Qatar**

At

**The 18th Session of the Conference of Parties to the
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

**Doha
December 4th, 2012**

**In the name of God
the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate**

**Your Excellencies and Highnesses,
Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I welcome you to Doha and express my sincere thanks for your participation in this important conference.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah, on his election as President of the 18th Session of the U.N Climate Change Conference.

I would also like to thank Her Excellency Mrs. Maite Nkoana Mashabane on the effective role played by her country throughout its presidency of the previous conference.

Hosting this conference by the State of Qatar comes out of its international responsibility, and out of her awareness of the importance of addressing the climate change phenomena and controlling its repercussions on all human beings.

There is no doubt that this conference represents the unfolding of a new phase in the history of humanity. The resolutions to be adopted by this conference would determine what we will bequeath to future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This conference is held amid unstable global conditions in terms of security and economy apart from the various challenges and risks facing the international community as a result of the climate change.

The climate change phenomenon is one of the major challenges of this era. It is a real problem, existing and worsening steadily and raising several complex problems with intertwined economic,

environmental and social dimensions, especially in its relation to food security and water, where the rate of desertification is increasing in many world countries and the agricultural sector is deteriorating.

It is no exaggeration to say that the climate change has its hazardous impacts on all aspects of life both in the developed and developing countries, while the latter bear the brunt of the damage caused by those repercussions.

The negative effects of climate change are extremely grave on the tracks of sustainable development aspired by all peoples, and it would not be acceptable to decide solutions for it at the expense of development.

Therefore no country would be able to find a haven in the past theories of isolationism because the causes of environmental damage have no borders and the failure to address them collectively and seriously will expose all peoples to danger.

It's against this background that we are required to deal with this phenomenon from a comprehensive perspective that takes into account all its causes. We have to be far-sighted in addressing this phenomenon at present and to reflect on how to face its challenges in the future without prejudice to the right of all peoples to realizing their sustainable development.

In this connection I call upon the developed countries to fulfill their international obligations concerning extending assistance to developing countries, as per the Convention,

I also call for reaching the right equilibrium between the needs of countries and communities for energy on the one hand and the requirements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on the other. Here technology could be utilized to achieve this, and we are ready in the State of Qatar to contribute to this field, because we are partners on this planet.

Honorable Audience,

Addressing the climate change requires political will and continuous regional and international cooperation. The way is still long, notwithstanding the efforts exerted at all levels during the last period, and that necessitates taking all possible measures to reach the aspired objectives and results commensurate with the people's aspirations and catering for a future in which international solidarity, justice and prosperity for all prevail.

In spite of variations in the circumstances among countries, today we are in an urgent need for international cooperation, and confirming the credibility of multilateral international action to counter climate change challenges.

Therefore the negotiating process on climate change convention should emanate from the sense of unity of purpose and destiny and seek a consensus on the joint goals epitomizing the concept of interdependence and building on what was agreed previously. The responsibility for reaching a practical and effective agreement is a collective obligation that falls on the shoulders of all of us.

Honorable Audience,

The State of Qatar is among the countries that are susceptible to the negative impacts of climate change and needs to work on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Hence it has paid great attention to the environmental issues and made them one of the mainstays of its National Vision 2030, which states that the environmental development and the economic development are two fundamental goals, and it would not be possible to sacrifice one of them for the sake of the other.

To achieve the long-term environmental goal, Qatar National Strategy 2011-2016 included a set of measurable goals that were defined within a medium-term framework. These specific goals are related to the sustainable use of water, improving air quality,

enhancing efficient use of gas and energy, limiting the use of all types of waste materials and recycling them, safeguarding biodiversity, increasing green areas along with the planned urban expansion, promoting environmental awareness among the population, and enhancing knowledge and deepening national commitment towards the environment issues.

These efforts are not confined to the Ministries and governmental organs but transcend them to include our major companies, whether governmental or mixed, as they all abide by the general goals envisaged in Qatar's National Vision which include the environmental objectives.

These companies have various projects either running or under execution, to name but a few of the projects that are aimed at minimizing gas flaring, carbon dioxide gathering, storage and re-injection as well as waste management to minimize it, in addition to rehabilitating combustion turbines in factories built before 2005 by introducing new technologies to reduce Nitrogen Oxide emissions that harm the environment. Al Shaheen Project is considered as one of the major exemplary clean development projects that aim at reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Also the exploitation of renewable energy has been initiated through the construction of solar industry infrastructure, namely, a factory to produce pure silicon as well as adopting the green buildings projects that use solar energy, such as Qatar National Convention Center, where we are meeting today, and which contain solar panels catering for 12% of the energy needs of the Center's exhibition hall.

There is also an initiative by Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa) - under the umbrella of the Ministry of Energy and Industry - that aims at exploiting solar energy to cater for 2 % of Qatar's electricity needs by 2020. We are open and welcome any assistance that could help us find the best ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Honorable Audience,

I am confident that you will be working hard in the few remaining days to find practical and flexible solutions as well as the appropriate decisions that would satisfy our aspirations towards a better future for us and for the future generations.

In conclusion, I would like to express our gratitude to the General Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change for the efforts it has exerted to achieve the goals and principles contained in the Convention. I also wish to commend the role of civil society organizations, the private sector and the media in realizing these goals.

I welcome you once again in the State of Qatar, and wish you all a pleasant stay in Doha and hope that this conference will achieve the aspired goals for the benefit of mankind.

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