

10 December 2006

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
on the Occasion of Human Rights Day 2006**

This year we commemorate Human Rights Day with the theme "Fighting Poverty: a matter of obligation not charity".

When poverty is so immediate and the suffering so intense the world has a moral and strategic obligation, to fight poverty and the address the human rights concerns of the most vulnerable.

The poorest are more likely to experience human rights violations, discrimination or other forms of persecution. Being poor makes it harder to find a job and get access to basic services, such as health, education and housing. Poverty is above all about having no power and no voice.

History is littered with well-meaning but failed solutions. If we are to eradicate poverty and promote human rights we need to take action to empower the poor and address the root causes of poverty, such as discrimination and social exclusion. It is because human rights, poverty reduction and the empowerment of the poor go hand in hand that we all have a moral duty to take action.