

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Statement

By

His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al-Thani

Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

At

The Opening Session

of the

**High-level Event of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the
Millennium Development Goals**

25 September 2008

UN General Assembly Hall, New York

Mr. President,

I am pleased at the outset to extend to you my congratulations on your election to the presidency of sixty-third session of the General Assembly. I have no doubt that you will add a distinctive character to the work of this session. I would like to take this opportunity also to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Srgjan Kerim for his distinguished presidency of the sixty-second session. I would also like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his laudable efforts in the field of maintaining international peace and security and achieving global development.

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

About eight years ago, at the dawn of the new millennium, the world's governments agreed on providing a new vision that is in line with the changing reality that requires a stronger and more effective global partnership for development. At that historic moment, the Millennium Declaration was signed that provided a bold vision that stems from a shared commitment to human rights, and that is supported by clear development goals and specific timetable that provide a crucial point of reference for measuring progress towards the establishment of a new world order that would be more equitable.

Mr. President,

This high-level event provides an opportunity to ask important questions, namely,

Where are we in terms of implementation of the commitments we made at the Millennium Summit as we approach the year 2015?

Are we satisfied with what we have achieved thus far in the framework of our humanitarian obligations towards addressing human tragedies?

We are delighted to learn that the goal of eradicating extreme poverty remains the focus of many countries and development partners, as reflected in the decline in the number of people living in extreme poverty. However, that success masks a slow progress in some regions in the world. This fact

alone confirms the need for further action to achieve the dynamics of a strong global growth and to maintain it with a broader participation.

Mr. President,

We in Qatar are keen to contribute effectively in building a global partnership for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, which were confirmed by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, when he declared in 2005 a commitment to devote 0.7 per cent Of the total national income as development assistance to developing countries, with the allocation of 0,15 per cent for the least developed countries. We affirm in this forum that we are ready to provide more development assistance to enable developing countries to achieve development goals. We are also keen to develop strategies to improve the effectiveness of development aid.

Mr. President,

Our challenge therefore is to maintain the sustainability of recent positive developments. Not only is it important for the fast-growing developing countries to make the right policy choices to combat poverty, but it is also crucial that developed countries take appropriate policy measures to overcome the persistent differences and disparities in the international trading system. Any global approach that gives the developing countries more room to participate in the coordination of economic and financial global policies is in the interest of developed and developing countries alike.

Mr. President,

At midway to the year 2015, the march to achieve the development goals has not been undertaken the same pace. Children, young people, and persons with disability in many regions in the world, are still deprived of access to quality education, healthcare services, training opportunities and decent work for both genders. We in Qatar believe that the Millennium Development Goals cannot be fully achieved unless social development is considered an integral part of the economic development. We therefore believe that the main engine for achieving those objectives consists also in creating new partnerships and innovative and practical mechanisms for financing education, health and youth employment of both genders.

Mr. President,

We as Governments – and before it is too late – should be required to accelerate the adoption of a decision to make this session the beginning of the "Decade of Development". If mechanisms are developed and necessary investments channeled to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it would contribute to the fulfillment of the promise of the Millennium Declaration. The Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Doha next November, provides a critical opportunity to adopt the required plans of action not only to get back on track towards the 2015 targets, but also to overcome the deep forms of inequalities that divide nations, and to find a new form of globalization that would be more equitable and just.

This is the favorable opportunity to demonstrate that the Millennium Declaration is not just promises, but a commitment to change. The Follow-up Conference in Doha provides the next opportunity for State leaders to mobilize investment resources and develop the necessary investment plans to build lines of defense capable of confronting challenges, in order to act in accordance with the vision that we have outlined almost eight years ago.

I thank you Mr. President.