



Report on The Doha Forum 2016



Introduction:

The sixteenth Doha Forum was held in the city of Doha from 21 to 23 May 2016, under the slogan “Stability and Prosperity for All”. It brought together more than 500 participants representing 82 countries, including leading politicians, thinkers, experts, businessmen, and activists in indigenous community field work and civil society organizations. Throughout three days, the forum discussed means of achieving international and local stability and prosperity in light of the big challenges that face the world today in the fields of security, economy, energy, and civil society.

1) Day One, May 21 2016

Opening Remarks:

The forum opened in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, their Excellencies the Yemeni president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, and the president of Afghanistan, Mohammed Ashraf Ghani, the President of Mauritius, Ameenah Gurib, the President of the Republic of Nigeria, Mohammed Buhari, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban-Ki Moon, and His Excellency, Mongens Lykketoft, the President of the United Nations General Assembly.

During the opening remarks, His Excellency Mohammed Ashraf Ghani, the President of Afghanistan, underlined the role of state institutions in securing international and local peace, and finding universal and shared understanding to look for new regulations to limit the problems plaguing the world. The President of Mauritius, Her Excellency

Ameenah Gurib, noted in her opening remarks that the Doha Forum has become one of the most important gatherings in the world, as it has laid a framework for itself to engage in dialogue in decision-making. She pointed out that the conflicts and the separatist movements that the world is witnessing are due to complex factors, and that risks of inequality in gender and age make youth and women a key element in these conflicts and turmoil.

His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Nigeria, Mohammed Buhari, said that the world needs to reform the United Nations, and that widespread poverty in developing countries and the lack of equality feed terrorism. He added that creating the conditions for political and economic stability are universal, and that there is a need for more justice, equality, and political and economic governance.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban-Ki Moon, said in his remarks that the international community must accomplish a lot to end conflicts and inequality, and put up a bigger effort to create a culture of prevention and focus on human rights. He stressed that the violent extremism that we are witnessing must be confronted with informed policies that deal with the root causes, deepens the goodwill and strives forward towards development, forgiveness, and rebuilding.

The President of the United Nations General-Assembly, His Excellency, Mogens Lykketoft, called for nations around the world to be more open, and to form a foundation for justice on the basis of governance, work, and encompassing policies that don't exclude anyone. He encouraged the communities of businessmen, construction, civil organizations, journalists, and many others to play a bigger role in this changing world.

The opening session was concluding with remarks by the Foreign Minister of Qatar, His Excellency, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, who said that the present conflicts the world is witnessing should lead politicians and thinkers to benefiting from dialogue on various issues, in order to find successful solutions and achieve stability and security for people in their countries. Furthermore, he said that meeting the aspirations of youth by allowing them to participate in world affairs, and contribute to serving the community, fulfilling social justice, teaching people how to value equality and renounce racism, is the way to defeat extremism and block the tools used by terrorist organizations to attract youth.

2) Day 2, May 22 2016

The First General Session About Security: The Current International and Local State, and Overcoming Challenges:

The session was opened by His Excellency Mongens Lykketoft, President of the United Nations General-Assembly, who made it clear that the existing infrastructure is unable to keep security and peace because of tensions, in the absence of tools and skills required to protect civilians. He also pointed out the urgency of responding responsibly to new patterns, with regards to challenges in the fields of security, stability, epidemics, and refugees. These are the issues that undermined confidence in the United Nations. He added that it was up to leading nations to increase pragmatic initiatives and to renew their commitments to conventions.

Argentina's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Her Excellency Susana Malcorra, pointed out that to realize a complete understanding for group work in order to overcome current challenges requires dialogue among all parties, and to implement international law and fulfill international cooperation. One party cannot face all these challenges alone. A focus must also be directed to what people want, so to look through their eyes in order to find solutions.

The Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, His Excellency Elmar Mammadyarov, said that overcoming challenges required a vision, and that the new world order has not taken shape since the end of the Cold War. First, he said the decisions of the UN Security Council, which haven't been implemented, should take effect.

His Excellency Manuel Gonzalez Sanz, the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, said that an all-encompassing understanding of security must be taken, if we wanted a global approach for challenges. He also pointed out that there is frustration among countries who feel that the decisions of the UN Security Council aren't implemented. This possibly undermines the concept of collective security. He also stressed finding inclusive and collective solutions for the challenges that the world is facing.

His Excellency Mohammed Malki bin Othman, Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Defense and Foreign Affairs, said that in order to combat growing terrorism, the extremist propaganda must be banned from social media, and we should also fight its ideology. He added that cooperation for a framework consisting of a global coalition against terrorist groups should be made, with the aim of restricting them.

His Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, said that sustainable development cannot be achieved in the absence of peace and security, and that "security solutions" and the "Iron Fist" failed in fixing problems and fulfilling the aspirations of people. He also pointed out that the Alliance of Civilizations is one of the soft power tools that were established to contribute to a safer and more peaceful world.

The participants stressed the importance of international and local cooperation to overcome the challenges that the world is facing in terms of the spread of terrorism,

violence, and extremism. They also added that the United Nations should do its job without any divisions, especially when it comes to carrying out and implementing the decisions of the UN Security Council. This includes strengthening the role of women, ensuring equal distribution of wealth, implementing new initiatives to protect human rights, and eradicating violence and terrorism.

Second General Session on Security: The Middle East: Towards more Stability and Prosperity

This session was opened by His Excellency Nikolay Mladenov, the UN Envoy for the Middle East, who pointed out the confiscation of freedom, absence of justice, lack of stability and prosperity, and the inequality among millions of people. He added that all of these undermined the chances for peace in the region, especially the failure of resolving the Palestinian issue, and the death of the two-state solution without ever implementing it. He also stressed the role of the international and local movement to resolve the matter as quickly as possible on the basis of the two-state solution.

The UN Envoy for Iraq, His Excellency Yan Kobish, agreed with him, based on the reluctance of the international community to resolve the Palestinian issue, and added that the current atmosphere doesn't help in any way; it, instead, feeds the violence internationally and locally. Therefore, a vigilant eye must be kept on the situation in the region based on a common future. He also talked about the importance of including the participation of women and the youth, the willingness to achieve coexistence, and the role of the United Nations in promoting the right values and standards.

His Excellency Ismail Ould Sheikh Ahmed, the UN Envoy for Yemen, said that despite the great challenges, the crisis in that country is not intractable in any way. He added that the difference concerns the details and mechanisms in implementing Rule 2216, which is connected to the Houthi's withdrawal from civilian areas, and surrender of weapons. He expressed his confidence in the possibility of building on common ground between the conflict parties in Yemen, assuring that the Yemeni peace consultations in Kuwait is an opportunity that might not come again.

The British under-secretary of state at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, His Excellency Tobias Ellwood, stressed that we are living in a period where trust and stability do not exist and the influence of extremism and terrorism is growing, which calls for us to be unified and find common solutions. He also pointed to the importance of fighting against ISIS and extremists using the same weapon used by those groups in enlistment, via modern technology mainly the internet. He talked about the British experience in this regard to encourage other countries to collaborate.

His Excellency Anas Alabda, the head of the National Coalition for the revolutionary and the opposition forces said that it is hard to imagine stability in the Middle East without Syria's stability, noting that the containment policy for the Syrian crisis during

five years was not effective. Regarding the Syrian regime's lack of commitment to its pledges, he said that the humanitarian issue cannot be negotiated. As for the political file, the Geneva negotiations (4) aimed at having a new policy that includes new constitution and public elections, but it was not serious.

In his speech, Dr. Saeb Erekat, the Chief Palestinian negotiator said that if we want to defeat "ISIS", we should spread democracy in the Arab World. He explained that the biggest challenge facing the Arab world is how to deal with young people's aspirations and hopes. We also have to end the conflict in Palestine. He called for developing the educational systems and eliminating the elements that spread hate from the educational material as well as enhancing the inter-Arab relations.

Dr. Valerie Amos, the Director of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London pointed out that the challenges are there, but the opportunity is there as well. She sees justice in the regional, local and international level as a new starting point. We must hold governments accountable and respect diversity and change our approach to some problems.

The session's participants assured the importance of finding solutions to a number of causes, especially the Palestinian issue, the Syrian crisis, as well as the importance of reaching an agreement that ends the crisis in Yemen : solving those issues would be a starting point to secure the area.

The Third Public Session: International Economy, Where Is It Going?

This session started with the remarks of His Excellency Sheikh Ahmed bin Jassim Al-Thani, Minister of Economy and Commerce in Qatar. He stressed that the geopolitical and the security problems facing countries are the biggest barrier for economic development. These problems have pushed the countries to resort to immersion policies represented in the closure of the border and the reducing of the flow of money and caution in investments. He explained that the solutions for these challenges should not be sought by countries on a lonely basis, but rather on a complementary one between economic blocs. He added that the complementary solutions to the current challenges require re-opening the borders, encouraging money flow, and encouraging the financial sector to pump money into assigned projects in less developed and developing countries because they are the supporters of economic growth in the world.

The session which hosted the candidates for the post of Secretary General of the United Nations, witnessed debates on the nature of the challenges facing the global economy, and the role of the United Nations to confront various crises, and update its mechanisms to cope with the major changes the world is witnessing.

His Excellency Danilo Turk, candidate for the position of Secretary General of the United Nations, former president of Slovenia, said that we need to mobilize energies and efforts and strengthen the political will to confront the problems facing the world today, and transform political commitments into practice, especially with regard to the implementation of the 2030 sustainable development agenda approved by the world leaders last year. .

Her Excellency Vesna Pusic, candidate for the position of Secretary General of the United Nations, First Deputy Prime Minister and former Croatian Foreign Minister, considered that the biggest challenge facing the world is not wars nor terrorism, but rather the inequality within countries and among the states themselves. She said, “The inequality increases poverty, deprivation and depriving millions of a decent life”.

In the same context, His Excellency Ambassador Natalia Gherman, candidate for the position of Secretary General of the United Nations, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova, called for the adoption of approaches to achieve equality within states and between the states themselves, as she considered the inequality as a major cause of conflicts, wars, extremism and terrorism.

His Excellency Srgjan Kerim, candidate for the position of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, addressed the challenges associated with population growth, trade, energy and institutions. He ruled out any economic growth of more than 10% for any of the countries of the world. And he said, “Talking about a growth rate over 10% has become past history”. But he cautioned that developing countries achieved growth rates higher than developed economies.

His Excellency Vuk Jeremic, candidate for the position of Secretary General of the United Nations, former Foreign Minister of Serbia, noted that the world is undergoing profound transformations and called on the United Nations to play a key role in confronting the challenges associated with those new shifts. He said that the United Nations is not ready to face the challenges of the 21st century and its current mechanisms will not be able to make progress in regard to the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

Her Excellency Carolyn Maloney, member of the US Congress focused in her speech on the economic challenges in light of declining oil and commodity prices. She ruled out the return of oil prices to above \$ 100, and called on oil-producing countries to search for and promote the smartest economic diversity, and increase sources of income by investing in infrastructure, and skilled and educated workforce.

Participants in this session concluded with the need to reform public finances, particularly in the oil-producing countries through the adoption of policies that promote diversity of the sources of income, as well as meeting the challenges of slow global economic growth, through the adoption of a series of structural reforms of national economies in the medium and long terms. They also emphasized the need to modernize the UN mechanisms to cope with the big changes taking place in the world .

Specialized Session: International Security. Current Reality and Challenges:

This session started with His Excellency Ismail Sharqi, the peace and security commissioner of the African Union, in which he suggested that Africa is a key partner in the global security system where terrorism still poses a threat. He said that the African experience is useful to other areas of the world, as the AU was able to strongly intervene whenever danger of genocide or a serious violation of human rights were sensed, thanks to the “ early warning system”. “We have the right to intervene without having to ask permission from the countries concerned, “ he added.

His Excellency Miguel Angel Moratinos, former Foreign Minister of Spain, asked: who leads the world today? And answered that it is led by giant companies such as Google, Yahoo and others, and there may not be anyone in command. It is a different world and we should address the security issues in an innovative way. The next Secretary General of the United Nations should reform the system because it no longer can deal with today’s challenges.

His Excellency Franco Frattini, former Foreign Minister of Italy, pointed to the political absence of Europe in a world that has lost its balance and witnesses a world war, where people find themselves a victim of the global unbalanced system calling to stop the misery and manifestations of poverty and armament. He stressed that without cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean, a unified European position and relinquishing of bureaucracy, we will not succeed in solving the problems floundering Middle East and North Africa, which will affect Europe negatively .

Her Excellency Rachida Dati, former Justice Minister of France, said that the world cannot remain silent while the states are collapsing due to globalized terrorism. Arguing that the reason behind the continued problems and conflicts which befall the world, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, is totally social, she called for reforming the United Nations system and cooperating, because no single country can solve these problems alone. She emphasized the need for a “real immediate mobilization “ to meet the challenges and overcome fear.

His Excellency Muhyiddin Amemor, former Minister of information in Algeria opined that there is a deliberate intention to discredit Islam by exploiting isolated terrorist incidents, while the area was still vulnerable to the colonial ambitions. The status of “jihad” is given to any terrorist operation carried out by a desperate person, while non-Muslim actions are obscured. He stressed that Islam is not subject of suspicion when it comes to terrorism, while the brainwashing operations are definitely colonial.

Her Excellency Ramona Manescu, head of the Qatari-European Friendship Association at the European Parliament, confirmed that war does not only destroy the present but the future as well, and if we do not do something now. The newspapers’ headlines in twenty years will be still about conflicts in the Middle East. She added that there should be an immediate focus on helping people stranded at the borders because of conflicts, and if we have a clear vision of the future, we will also need force to achieve it.

Participants in the Specialized Session on Global Security called for the convergence of international efforts and coming to new agreements to address shared challenges and problems such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, terrorism and others which threaten international peace and security.

Second Specialized Session: Gulf Security - Dialogue Instead of Conflict

This session opened with remarks by Mr. Jamal Khashoggi, General Manager of Al-Arab News Channel, in which he stressed that dialogue is an excellent idea to resolve disputes and zero-sum conflicts. He gave an example of the Iranians who insist on supporting a tyrant in Syria and rebels in Yemen. He said that on one hand the Iranians call for dialogue and on the other they support the war in Syria and support minority rule in Yemen. They are on the wrong side of history while Saudi Arabia is on the right side. Khashoggi believes that dialogue is possible so long as there is restraint, and he mentioned that Saudi Arabia plays an important role and brought all parties together in Kuwait.

Whereas Mr. Jean-Marie Guinea, President of the International Crisis Group in Belgium, believes that it is clear that dialogue is as difficult as it was during the Cold War, and now the world has become unipolar. He said, we are in desperate need for integration and dialogue between all parties, pointing out that landscaping the region is not possible if there continues to be a state of conflict in the Middle East. Guinea advised stopping the arms race in the region. He explained the urgent need for public and private integration that shows willingness to create dialogue and works to build confidence that requires quiet diplomacy. He also discussed the need for a comprehensive deal to stabilize the region.

Dr. Ata'ollah Mohajerani, former Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, compared the organization of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant "Daesh" to syphilis. He believes serious dialogue is the key to stability in the Gulf region.

Mr. Jaber Al-Harami, editor-in-chief of the Qatari newspaper Al-Sharq, stated that states should build factories instead of arms and that there should be dialogue instead of threats. Despite the wealth in the region it has not been utilized for development, but rather for feud and mass sectarianism. Al-Harami goes on to state that His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, in September 2015, called for dialogue at the United Nations, as he sees there is an urgent need for serious dialogue to be an object to emulate and there are success stories such as the ASEAN experience.

Dr. Alireza Nourizadeh, Director at the Center for Arab & Iranian Studies in London, indicated there is a difference between the Iranian people and the Iranian government. Iran did not choose its neighbors, the same applies to the Gulf states which did not choose Iran as their neighbor. Therefore, both sides must adapt to one another. He expected Arab intellectuals to reciprocate the feelings of affection the Iranian intellectuals have for the Arabs, for they translate their intellectual production into the Arabic language, in addition to having channels broadcasting in Arabic. On the other hand, there are no Arabs translating into the Iranian language or any Arab channels speaking Iranian. Nourizadeh hoped the Iranian government would become secular, and in the end he stressed the importance of dialogue between nations.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Shayji, Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University, said the main problem is the lack of power balance (balance of terror), which leads to a lack

of balanced policies and superiority attitude. For Iran controls Iraq which benefited from the nuclear deal, and they look down on the Arabs. The conflict with Iran is not a border dispute, it is a strategic disagreement. Iran exports sectarianism and sends terrorist cells to the Gulf states, for it wants to gain from the West at the expense of its neighbors. He strongly defended the need to reach a balance of power before dialogue can take place.

Dr. Ian Anthony, Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, said that we try to prevent bipolarity in the world, like Eastern Ukraine. It is possible that agreements can be held, as they have been over the past sixty years and that we have a large network of European institutions and a considerable level of dialogue between cities.

Dr. Degang Sun, Director of the Center of Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies University, indicated that the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran leads to instability. Collective security is dependent on all parties and non-interference in all internal affairs. Bad peace is better than a good war, and there are several things that should be applied, including the Gulf states reaching an understanding, peaceful resolution, non-interference and putting their differences aside. They should also apply confidence-building integration, and Qatar could play a mediating role where all parties can achieve collective security.

The majority of participants in the Specialized Session on Gulf Security agreed that Iran does not want to coexist peacefully with the region's countries, as it insists on supporting tyrants in the Arab world, especially in Syria and Yemen. They pointed out that Iran is currently fighting in Syria and at the same time calling for dialogue, despite supporting Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and encouraging him not to sit down and negotiate. They also emphasized the importance of communication between nations in the region.

Third Specialized Session: Achieving the International Agenda of Sustainable Development in Light of the Current Global Economic Conditions

The session began with an intervention from His Excellency Dimitrios Mardas, Greek Deputy Foreign Minister, explaining the positive characteristics of the Greek economy which owns a global logistics center, many ports and a prime tourism sector. He also stated that the economic crisis has made the Greek economy more open to the outside. Building companies expanded their operations throughout the world and Greek companies are more interested in global markets than domestic markets. Mardas also presented the opportunities available to investors in the private sectors of tourism, renewable energy and pharmaceutical fields.

Her Excellency Maya Fiestad, Deputy Minister of Strategic Development in Sweden, noted that the world has unanimously approved the 2015-2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that was discussed with all parties, the private sector and civil society. This agenda came inclusive of all sectors and all countries. She emphasized the willingness of the Swedish government to implement the international development agenda, where a national committee has been formed to develop a comprehensive action plan in cooperation with the municipal unions. Fiestad noted the role Sweden plays in providing aid to developing countries and their efforts in the fight against climate change.

His Excellency Shahid Malik, former United Kingdom International Development Minister, pointed out that the world did not deal with poverty in a sustainable way. He stressed the role of the United Nations' agencies in promoting sustainable development and fighting poverty. The world would be worse off without these agencies. Then Shahid talked about the increasing aid provided by the United Kingdom to support development efforts in developing countries, which surpassed 0.7% of the Gross National Product (GNP). He highlighted all cross-border challenges the world is witnessing, such as scarcity of resources, climate change, terrorism, famine and poverty adding that these important issues should be addressed collectively.

His Excellency Hyun Oh-Seok, Deputy Prime Minister and former Minister of Strategy and Finance in South Korea, said the sustainable development agenda calls for inclusive growth and this calls for reduced carbon emissions rates, structural reforms to improve the government and work environment, competitiveness and job creation. These efforts at home, in the region and the world are essential, but the broader coordination in light of the large number of political goals opposes it. Coordination of policies is important if we are to achieve the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. This requires the recreation of a global economy that leads to sustainable growth, and today we are in dire need of a global framework in order to ensure growth and address the problem of inequality.

Dr. Ishrat Husain, Dean of the Institute of Business Administration - Pakistan, talked about the atmosphere in the Millennium Development Goals, which was characterized by global economic stability and achieving growth rates exceeding

10% in both China and Brazil. The atmosphere in which the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 was drafted represents a global economic environment that is difficult, chaotic and politically unstable, particularly in the Middle East. He pointed out that the 2030 Goals of Sustainable Development are ambitious and require doubled efforts from all sectors of the government, civil society, the private sector and resource mobilization. The current complex situation in developing and emerging countries and the conflicts between ethnic groups is on the rise; building consensus within the state for the implementation of the sustainable development agenda goes against the grain, and that corruption is an obstacle to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

The participants in this meeting unanimously agreed that the world today is in dire need to mobilize energies and efforts and strengthen political will to face the problems, in order to translate commitments into practices; particularly those with regards to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. They stressed the need for the participation of the three sectors, public, private and civil society, in order to achieve those goals; in addition to the support that can be provided by the United Nations agencies in the field.

3) Day Three, 23 May 2016

Fourth Plenary Session: Energy, The Global Status Quo - Challenges and Opportunities

His Excellency Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, former Deputy Prime Minister of Qatar and Minister of the Energy and Industry, began this session stating the primary reason for the significant decline in oil prices is not due to the conspiracy theory echoed by some, instead it is the result of the system of supply and demand in the global market, which is subject to many factors. He stressed that Saudi Arabia and OPEC are not able to control global oil prices, pointing to the decline in OPEC's share of world production to about (30%) after it was more than (70%), for there are countries such as Russia, Mexico and Norway who produce large quantities of oil that affect the global market.

His Excellency Antonio Isa Conde, Minister of Energy and Mines in the Dominican Republic, pointed out that the fall in oil prices did not make his country hesitate to diversify its energy sources. They stored large amounts of the oil and were able to move forward relying on the wind, new explorations and production. He stressed the importance of providing sources of energy at affordable prices to poor countries, and the importance of renewable energy such as wind and water.

His Excellency Ivan Orellana, Assistant Minister of Energy and Mining in Venezuela, discussed the disparity in the distribution of conventional power and how solar energy does not show such disparity and inconsistency. Regardless of the imbalances and efforts we can make to solve them, there are other more important problems linked to poverty.

In the session, His Excellency Nasrul Hamid, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources of Bangladesh, stressed that the decline in oil prices, despite being beneficial to some economies, burdens other economies. He asked the petroleum exporting countries to prepare to accommodate this issue, and called for the need to create a new energy organization for renewable energy sources. He stressed the importance of investing in the expansion of solar energy as it is available in all countries for free, as it is the future in the face of rising oil prices and can be used on a large scale. He also referred to the formation of a new energy organization led by States of the Arabian Gulf, as a center for solar energy in the world.

Dr. Ibrahim Ibrahim, Economic Adviser to the Emiri Diwan in Qatar, confirmed that the decline in oil prices reached about (74%) between mid-2014 and 2016. This led to a deficit in the budgets of the Arabian Gulf States which is estimated at (12%), this is what prompted them to develop plans to address the deficit. The plans include reducing public spending and rationalization, and encouraging the private sector. He called for coordination between the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to implement these programs and plans.

His Excellency Suleiman Al-Herbish, Director-General of the OPEC Fund for International Development, pointed out the importance saving energy in states as

it achieves economic, social and environmental development. He stated that oil will remain the primary source of energy, especially as the wind, sun and water only replace the electricity sector, while oil and gas are the foundation. He explained that OPEC agreed in 2011 to allocate a billion dollars to the distribution of power to the world's poor in (134) states through projects for the rehabilitation of electricity distribution and hydro power projects.

Participants in this session concluded with what they described as selected lessons from the global oil crisis, where they agreed on the need for complex and varied monitoring of the energy crisis and its relation to the environment. They noted that energy management is a key issue and requires the participation of everyone. They stressed the importance of moving towards heavily investing in renewable energy and not relying solely on oil. They emphasized that investing in renewable energy is an investment in our collective future, and that the decisions are not only environmental but will also affect all aspects of life, including the economy, employment, health and security.

Fifth Plenary Session: The Role of Civil Society in Achieving Development Partnership

This session was started by His Excellency Habib bin Mohammed Al- Riyami, Secretary General of Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science. He talked about the importance of uniformity, compatibility, non-exclusion of the components of civil society in the development and community building process, which should be done through partnership and listening to one another. He said that history is witness that all communities were found to be homogeneous, whereas those in which the exclusion occurs do not evolve.

Dr. Eric Schwartz, Dean of the Hubert Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, talked about the possibility that governments could benefit from the role of civil society organizations in providing aid during disasters and crises. He urged governments not to restrict the organizations concerned with the political and social aspects, and provide expertise and advice and promote progress.

Ms. Amal Al-Mannai, Executive Director of the Social Development Centre in Qatar, noted that the time has come to turn the page of one central authority and take the partnership approach to development. Stressing that a strong civil society needs several stimuli, including legal legislation to frame it. In addition, a social dialogue between the state and all parts of society, and the creation of leaders, entrepreneurs and others interested in civil social activity.

Mr. Mohammed Jouili, Director of the National Observatory for Youth in Tunisia, spoke about the bumps and difficulties facing civil society, notably the prevalence of certain forms of corruption. He said "Every party in civil society (the international donors, community and beneficiaries) now has its own culture, orientation and objectives, which requires a conscious move to fill the soft underbelly of the civil work to achieve the desired benefit from it".

Mr. Murad Pasha, Member of the Board of Trustees of the Turkish Humanitarian Relief, stated that we cannot raise the current challenges related to development and security without due importance to the role of civil society in the promotion of developing countries. He gave an example from Turkey, where the number of civil society organizations has reached about 150,000 organizations.

Dr. Vladimir Petrov Shopov, Expert at the Bulgarian Institute of International Affairs, gave a brief overview of the evolution of the work of civil society organizations in Bulgaria after 1989 and how they transformed from institutions opposing the country to independent entities. They became known in the late stages as “institutes of policy formulation”. This has led to a growing culture of partnership with the government and finding a balance between the role and responsibilities of the state and the role and responsibilities of civil society.

Participants in this session were unanimous on the importance of the role played by non-governmental organizations to cope with the requirements of the times and the partnership is not achieved at the local level, but also at the international and regional levels. Participants called on developing nations to make way for civil society to play a role in promoting development, particularly in the fields of health, education, relief, the fight against extremism and terrorism.



Closing Session:

This session was chaired by His Excellency Dr. Hassan bin Ibrahim Al-Mohannadi, Director of the Diplomatic Institute at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He presented the moderators of the forum with the highlights discussed in each session. They reemphasized the interdependence of regional and international issues of mutual effect they have on each other, and the importance of governance, common culture, development, justice, diversity and listening to one another in community building. They recommended the need for a joint leadership to address issues, reform the United Nations and support education and innovation. They agreed on the need to depend on alternative energies and transform political commitments into practices. They warned of the dire consequences of inaction on the implementation of the nations' resolutions, the importance of involving all parties in seeking to resolve disputes peacefully, and to provide room for the youth, women and civil society to contribute to the enrichment of public life.

The Forum concluded with remarks by His Excellency Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, Minister's Assistant for Foreign Affairs of Qatar. He praised the valuable contribution of the participants during the sessions enriching discussions, including senior leaders, politicians and experts from different countries of the world. He thanked all the participants who shared their ideas and visions over the three days, and put forward solutions to address the political and economic challenges facing the world.