



Unofficial Translation

**Speech of His Highness
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Amir of The State of Qatar**

At

**The General Debate of the 71st Session
of the UN General Assembly**

**New York
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In the name of God
The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,

Your Majesties, Excellencies, and Highnesses,
Your Excellency, President of the United Nations General Assembly,
Your Excellency, the Secretary General of the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, it gives me pleasure to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Peter Thomson on assuming the duties of the President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly, wishing him every success in his tasks.

I want also to express our appreciation to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft for his efforts during his presidency of the 70th Session of the General Assembly.

I wish also to extend our profound thanks to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his efforts during his tenure to achieve the United Nations' goals.

Mr. President,
Honorable Audience,

The international community is facing grave challenges of some unresolved regional and international crises that have become a hindrance to regional and international development and stability, and some countries pursue an approach of action beyond the framework of international legitimacy against the backdrop of an international negligence of implementing Security Council resolutions.

It is no longer possible to ignore the weakness of the United Nations' legal and institutional system and its inability in many cases to apply standards of justice and fairness to the mechanisms of its functioning.

However, there is a persistent recurring pattern that marks all these crises, and that is the selectivity of the Security Council in addressing the problems, especially when it comes to the use of force by countries in international relations.

**Mr. President,
Honorable Audience,**

After more than seven decades of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, the Palestinian cause is at standstill waiting for a just solution.

The Government of Israel has not only rejected the resolutions of international legitimacy and the comprehensive Arab peace initiative, but seeks to impose a fait accompli through long-term plans to build settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem. It has founded its occupation on discrimination and racial segregation, and established two legal systems under its sovereignty, one for the occupiers and the other for those languishing under the occupation.

Against the backdrop of the world's silence and the Arab States' engagement in their current issues, Israel's leaders may believe that they succeeded in their endeavor. But in fact they have failed to resolve any issue. The Palestinian people are more devoted to their rights than ever.

Furthermore, as Israel proceeds with the occupation and its practices, the Arab peoples can't accept any kind of normalization of relations with Israel before achieving a just solution to the Palestinian cause.

Besides, what could Israel do with the millions of Palestinians living on their own land and are increasing in number and resourcefulness? So, the options are narrowing and Israel has either to go for the two-state solution or to opt for establishing a system of apartheid. And does Israel really think that it could maintain a system of apartheid in the 21st century?

However, eliminating the occupation has become an urgent political and security prerequisite and an international obligation towards a people whose land was occupied and homeland confiscated, and their suffering is exacerbating.

The Security Council bears a special responsibility to impose international legitimacy and consensus regarding the negotiations on the basis of the two-state solution, including the establishment of a Palestinian State with its capital in East Jerusalem, on the borders of 1967. Meanwhile, it is necessary to cease settlement activity, respect the legal status of Al Quds (Jerusalem), lift the unjust siege on the Gaza Strip and end the Israeli occupation of all occupied Arab territories including the Syrian Golan.

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

Previously we had warned from this forum that inaction in addressing the crises would increase their intensity and complexity and consequently would pose a threat to the international security.

Here we meet again more than five years after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis, and in the aftermath of the destruction of the majority of Syrian cities by the regime. As a result the numbers of refugees have doubled, and seeking refuge has become trans-continental. Syria now is importing terrorist and sectarian organizations and militias, which pose a regional and international threat.

Everyone knows that the Syrian revolution had started as a popular peaceful uprising against a repressive dictatorial regime, and that this great people face killings in peaceful demonstrations and torture in prisons over a year time without defending itself.

During this period, the Syrian regime tried deliberately to drag the revolution into violence. It has also acted through a guided political rhetoric to split the Syrian people into factions, but the people responded by chanting "Only one, the Syrian people are one." The declared slogan of the regime was " Only al-Assad or we will burn down the country." Perhaps, many people have not realized that this slogan is the de facto project of the regime and its only and exclusive program.

Theoretically, the majority of the countries of the world stood by the Syrian people, but practically they were left alone supported only by some loyal friends.

Red lines were set for the regime who has violated them, yet those who demarcated those lines have not felt provoked to raise a finger. The red line continued to be shifted until the regime became aware of the fact that there is no ceiling for what it could perpetrate without accountability.

It is true that violent radical forces, which have nothing to do with the objectives of the Syrian revolution, have entered the Syrian arena and refused to fly its banner, and fought against the rebels more than against the regime.

There were many violations, but these phenomena, which marred the revolution could not be understood in isolation from the barbaric policy of repression applied by the Syrian regime and the inability of the international community to protect the civilians against the chemical weapons, bomb barrels and policy of torture.

Daria City has presented an epitome of the peaceful revolution which started by tossing flowers to the soldiers. But after major massacres such as the one (on August 25, 2012) which claimed hundreds of lives, mostly women and children, the city was forced, like other cities, to defend itself.

Henceforth, Daria was reeling under non-stop shelling and starvation siege, although it has not been controlled by any radical or Takfiri organization, and its revolutionaries have not committed any violations. So why its inhabitants ended up just being watched by the international community while being subjected to displacement in a blatant demographic cleansing process? Why no warning was issued against its shelling and depopulation similar to the warning against the bombing of other forces in Hasaka province recently? Which we consider as an appropriate one, but no similar action was taken concerning Daria, Muadamiyat al-Sham, Madaya, al-Zapandani and other towns threatened with displacement? This is what raised many eyebrows among Syrian citizens.

We can't fool ourselves or our people, because it is unacceptable that the will of the international community is crippled vis-à-vis the perpetrators of crimes against humanity. It is not true that the protection of the Syrian people was not possible. The international community had allowed illegal military interventions to overthrow regimes in our region, which are still taking their toll on us until this day. Unfortunately, many among us share in bearing responsibility for that, but the international community itself refrained from protecting a defenseless people, although this people proved to be able to change the regime on its own if protected against the bombardment.

Putting an end to this humanitarian disaster has become a political and moral necessity that imposes a historical and irrepudiable responsibility on the Security Council to stop the bloodshed of the Syrians by halting the barbaric bombing and blockade on cities - staged under the slogan "starvation or kneeling" - and to repatriate the displaced, and to take measures for the resumption of the political process within the framework of the Security Council Resolution (2254) and on the basis of the Geneva (1) decisions, which stipulate forming a transitional ruling body with full powers to meet the aspirations of the Syrian people and maintain the unity and sovereignty of Syria, on the basis of equal rights for all citizens of Syria, without discrimination on the basis of faith, creed, ethnicity, and race.

Mr. President,
Honorable Audience,

The Gulf region has a strategic importance at the regional and global levels. This region is undergoing some of the crises which are disparate in characters but similar in core. We must resort to a constructive dialogue to find solutions for them. Dialogue between countries must be based on the principles of good neighborliness, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs, in order to reach the desired results. The success of the dialogue among parties within a State, as is the case in Iraq, requires giving priority to political and social consensus as well as consolidating the concept of the full and equal citizenship before the law, away from all forms of sectarianism.

Regarding the brotherly Yemen, the State of Qatar renews its support for the return of legitimacy as the only way to ensure its security, unity and stability. No doubt that the negligence of the international community in implementing the Security Council resolutions, especially resolution 2216, had given some political forces in Yemen the opportunity to carry out coup-related actions that hampered the desired political solution which achieves the interests of the Yemeni people in unity and stability.

I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the efforts of my brother, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait in sponsoring the Yemeni negotiations hosted by the State of Kuwait. We will continue our support for the task of the Secretary General's Special Envoy to Yemen, and the international efforts for resuming the political consultations among the Yemeni parties to reach a political settlement according to the Gulf initiative, the outputs of the national dialogue and the Security Council Resolution 2216.

**Mr. President,
Honorable Audience,**

Although the situation in sisterly Libya is still turbulent, we look forward to restoring stability through the efforts of the Presidential Council and the present government backed by the international community and to confronting terrorism and tackling its serious effects. The State of Qatar has contributed to the success of the international political solution. We reaffirm our support to all efforts aimed at reinforcing the Libyan national concordance and we warn that instability would deal a damaging blow to what has been achieved, and would undermine the United Nations' efforts aiming at promoting the national concordance affirmed by the Security Council.

We are surprised that some countries have supported forces that reject the international solution and act to thwart the security council's resolution by force despite the fact that the resolution provides for imposing sanctions on such forces. And at the time when the forces which have placed themselves under the authority of the Presidential Council are engaged in combating terrorism, other forces that reject the international solution took advantage of the situation to occupy oil export terminals against the backdrop of a tight-lipped world. Is this a proper way to encourage the Libyans to combat terrorism?

Mr. President,

The terrorism, which we face, remains a source of threat to our peoples, countries, economic and social achievements, which necessitates intensification of our efforts to combat it.

We are all mindful that success in confronting this dangerous phenomenon is not easy, but it is not impossible when there is a political will to tackle the social roots of this abhorrent phenomenon, and understanding the circumstances that are contributive to promoting radical ideologies in an atmosphere of desperation and deadlocked vistas.

In order to protect the youth who are being targeted by the extremist groups, the fight against terrorism must not be confined to the security dimension, which per se is essential, but must also go far beyond that to promote the values of tolerance, culture of plurality and dialogue, while taking into consideration the right of the peoples to resist occupation, which is a right that has been enshrined in the international laws, covenants and norms.

For the education of the youth and mobilization of the communities against terrorism to gain credibility, we must be diligent in defining terrorism and standing against it. This definition must not be altered depending on the identity of the perpetrator or the victim or on account of a certain political interest. We saw cases when a certain organization had been branded as terrorist when it was a political foe, but later the same organization was embraced when it suddenly became a temporary ally.

There must not be a discrimination between the lives of civilians whether in Istanbul or Gaza, New York or Aleppo, etc. There is no life that is more qualitatively valuable than another life.

The double standards handling of this phenomenon or linking it to a certain faith or culture, or absolving governments who practice terrorism from being described as terrorist, would complicate the efforts to uproot the phenomena and reinforce the pretexts used by the terrorists.

In this context and proceeding from our policy that rejects radicalism and terrorism and which is based on our values, culture and the teachings of the true Islamic religion, we reiterate our support for the efforts exerted within the framework of the international legitimacy to eradicate and root out this phenomena.

**Mr. President,
Honorable Audience,**

Respect, protection and promotion of human rights constitute one of the basic pillars of the UN's principles and objectives. Based on our Arab and Islamic principles and values that treasure the value of the human being honored by Almighty God, the State of Qatar has been keen on implementing its obligations at both national and international levels to defend the collective and individual rights and promote human rights in the world.

In this respect, one of the most important challenges that is incumbent upon all of us to counter at the moment, is the one related to protecting refugees. That challenge imposes cooperation and joint action on us in order to overcome the causes of refuge, that is the most important. On the other hand, providing aid and assistance remains an urgent humanitarian duty that must be carried out.

Our developmental and relief contribution has reached out to more than 100 countries around the world, and we are still coordinating with the governmental and non-governmental agencies to provide developmental and relief aid. Qatar supports over ten million children around the world in addition to promoting the potentiality of 1.2 million Arab youth to empower them to be active and productive in their communities. In the last five years, since 2011, the value of assistance provided by the State of Qatar has increased three folds to reach 13 billion Qatari Riyals.

**Mr. President,
Honorable Audience,**

The State of Qatar will continue to remain as a venue for dialogue and conflict resolution by peaceful means, and will stay committed to the multilateral international action, cooperation and partnership within the framework of the international community to counter the common humanitarian challenges.

Thank you, and May Allah's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.
