



International Seminar – 28-29 October 2008

Towards Qatar's National Strategy: Issues and Challenges

Qatar National Vision 2030: The Four Development Pillars

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His Highness, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, Heir Apparent
H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Qatar
H.E. Dr Ibrahim Ibrahim, Secretary General, GSDP
Distinguished participants and colleagues

Good morning. A very warm welcome to you all, especially to all our international speakers and participants – I wish all of you a warm “Marhaba – Ahlan Wasalan”. I would especially like to thank His Highness Sheikh Tamim and His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim, the Prime Minister, for their gracious attendance here today despite their very busy schedules. Their esteemed presence indicates the importance that Qatar’s leadership attaches to strategic planning for national development.

This is a momentous occasion. The launching of *Qatar’s National Vision 2030* and the start of the process of preparing the First National Strategy constitute an important milestone in our nation’s history.

Qatar’s National Vision 2030 has benefited from the guidance of His Highness the Emir, as well as extensive and inclusive dialogue with government ministries and agencies, the private sector, civil society, local and international experts. Let me take this opportunity to thank them for their sincere engagement and great support.

In the midst of the current severe global financial and economic crisis, which is unprecedented in living memory. Qatar’s National Vision provides us with a steadying compass that charts future directions that should contribute to a stable and prosperous economy that will benefit the Qatari people.

Qatar’s remarkable economic advances provide solid financial and structural foundations for the country to launch its long-term vision. And Qatar has made conspicuous progress in human development - moving from 57th to 35th out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index between 1997 and 2007.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Qatar’s National Vision 2030 is underpinned by four interrelated pillars, Human Development; Social Development; Economic Development and Environmental Development. Each pillar encompasses a set of development outcomes towards which the country aspires.

Human Development is an approach to development that goes beyond income considerations alone. It is a process of increasing people’s capabilities and choices. ***Qatar’s Human Development Pillar*** foresees the nation building world-class education and health systems that provide all citizens with opportunities to realize their potential.

Human capital development, especially in science and technology, will remain a priority as we seek to achieve the targets of Qatarization and the needs of a knowledge economy. An improved human capital base will help Qatar to become more competitive and to better manage the multiple challenges of globalization. This will require investments in capacity building to ensure a motivated and innovative workforce.

Without social care and protection, there can be no equitable development. **Qatar's Social Development Pillar** promotes strong family values and an effective social safety net for all Qataris, such that they have an adequate income to maintain a dignified life.

The broadening and deepening of democratic institutions, including giving civil society a voice in social policy, is foreseen in the *Qatar National Vision 2030*. It envisages inclusive institutions that will help to preserve the country's national heritage and enhance Arab and Islamic values and identity. There will be increasing opportunities to empower Qatari women, and to provide them equal opportunities to participate at all levels of society.

There cannot be development if there is conflict and insecurity. Qatar will enhance its regional cooperation, especially within the GCC and the wider Arab region, and engage constructively in conflict prevention. It will also contribute positively to the global partnership for development.

Qatar will ensure that its natural resources are a blessing for all of its people. We will endeavour to ensure the effective stewardship and management of our economic assets. **Qatar's Economic Development Pillar** foresees the responsible and strategic use of our hydrocarbon resources so that they benefit both the current generation and generations as yet unborn. We will prudently manage our offshore investments. And we will continue increasing our efforts to diversify and transform our economy, gradually reducing its dependence on hydrocarbon-based industries.

In these turbulent times, Qatar must also carefully manage risks that could jeopardize our legacy to future generations. Financial and economic stability are the bedrock on which our ambitions must build. We must resolutely tackle economic imbalances and ensure that we create an environment in which business can thrive.

Qatar will aim to balance its development needs with the conservation and protection of its unique environment. Through **Qatar's Environmental Development Pillar** there will be increased advocacy efforts to build an environmentally aware population. There is a need to formulate appropriate legislation that supports the improved management of our natural resources and of our environment. Qatar will seek to increase national, regional and international cooperation to address the negative externalities of economic development.

In conclusion, I urge all to work together as we begin the formulation of the country's first National Strategy. A shared vision will strengthen our collective resolve for inclusive and successful national development. Starting from today, GSDP will report regularly on progress towards the *Vision* through its new website, which will also contain the presentations and reports arising from this Seminar.

I wish you all a successful seminar.