

**The Speech of
HE Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

At

The 16th Doha Forum

Doha,

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In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful,,

Your Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir Of the State of Qatar,

Your Excellences,

Honorable audience,

Warm greetings to you all and welcome to the 16th session of Doha Forum which was first launched 16 years ago as a pluralistic platform for reasonable dialogue about the main issues of our region and the world. The kind sponsorship and continuous support extended by HH Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani (may Allah protect him) to the forum made it one of the most important gatherings where in-depth deliberations about various developments and issues of the world are held. The forum also contributes wisely to the efforts to face challenges and crises and works to establish security and stability, which are in great demand now more than any other time in light of the crises that the world is passing through, and all that require holding consultations between the politicians and intellectuals in all fields to find the right solutions to achieve stability and security for the peoples and the countries of the world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Respectable audience,

The terms of peace, stability and security became the most prevalent in the political jargon today, and strong competitors to terms such as honor, justice and freedom.

In light of the regional and international variables some political powers try to impose disparity between these concepts, while no doubt the challenge lies in trying to confirm the characteristic integration and consistence between them.

Real peace is based on justice and not on repression. The narrow concept of security is most likely to pose a threat to security itself, as it is no longer possible to achieve economic development without comprehensive human development, it is also imperative to consider all relevant economic, political, environmental and social aspects when dealing with the issue of security.

It is the duty of the state to achieve security for its people and society. This is its exclusive job, the fulfilment of which is faced by tough challenges in many regions of the world, foremost armed conflicts, the spread of terrorism and extremism, poverty, unemployment resulting from disparity in development between and within the nations, increasing number of homeless refugees and the phenomenon of armed militias who operate outside the realm of the state institution.

These challenges are huge in their own right, but there are some factors that intensify their impact, including the selective approach that the United Nations Security Council adopts in dealing with different issues, the use of force as a main option by some powers to solve the problems, dependence of some political powers on evoking apprehensions and racial and sectarian sentiments which marginalize policy and lead to one of two results: exclusion or civil war. These two outcomes represent two sides of the same approach that aims to divide the societies into warring groups and destroy citizenship concept as a viable direct relation between the state and the citizen.

Facing the challenges of security entails a comprehensive approach to human and social security, which means reconsidering many current policies and practices.

On the international relations level, the wisest thing to do is to observe the international law and the United Nations Charter which set forth eminent human values that are recognized worldwide. Steering clear of resolving the issues by confining them in what is sometimes called "political processes" and in other times "peace processes", may mean, without underestimating their importance, leaving the weak at the mercy of the strong, and preferring authoritative instructions to upholding justice and equity principles.

Honorable audience,

Repression, tyranny, double standards and violating human right and basic freedoms constitute the underlying elements of threat to the human security.

It is obvious that the best way to resolve these issues is to enhance political and social dialogue in all forms and through all channels to find the best ways that lead to change through reforming the institutions of the state and the current laws, practices and policies.

The peoples of the Arab world revolted when the avenues of reform were blocked. The violent response from security forces aggravated the situation and created new problems that were not there in the first place. In this respect the only guarantee for security and stability is to reach an inclusive national reconciliation in our Arab world and agree to the process of change. There is no way to achieve this except through giving precedence to political and social concord and dialogue between the peoples and their governments to facilitate the implementation of the popular reforms, foremost of which is respecting human rights, dignity and basic freedoms, which are now considered valuable gains for the whole humanity.

Agreement on full and equal citizenship in front of the law, and adopting it as a general principle is the shortest and most definite way to yield tangible results from any such dialogue.

**Ladies and gentlemen,
Honorable guests,**

The Middle East region needs peace, security and stability. The failure of the international community to end the last occupation and bring justice to the Palestinian people through accountability is the main threat to the region's security and stability.

The Israeli Palestinian peace process sponsored by the United States has come to a dead end due to the lack of agreed common ground for the negotiations, and to subjecting the process to the logic of strength. During the negotiations Israel continued to expand and build settlements, and the realities on the ground started to distance us away from the two states solution.

The failure of the international community to impose the tenets of just peace in the Middle East leaves the Palestinian people hostage to the occupation, and the peoples of the region exposed to the ravages of anger and disappointment.

The solution of the Palestinian cause is so long overdue that the Arab individuals started to count their ages by the number of uprisings and wars. The Arab youth grew up with the scenes of Israel challenging the world by building settlements in occupied lands, Judaizing Al Quds, expelling the Palestinians and confiscating their lands, continuing the siege of Gaza Strip and waging war against it every few years.

We are not in the era of geographical discoveries and genocide. The Palestinian people insist to get their inalienable national rights and rear their children to protect and cherish them. Even at the time of marginalizing the Palestinian cause due to the storm that is devastating some of our countries, we still see the Arab peoples agree on the legitimacy of this cause. If Israel is betting on time, time only could aggravate and complicate the issues, and it will not benefit those who do not know how to make use of it.

If the international community wants to achieve security and stability in the Middle East and the world, it has to put an end to the Israeli occupation of the Arab lands, including Al Quds and the Golan Heights, and reach a just, comprehensive and lasting peace based on the resolutions of the international legitimacy.

Honorable audience,

The reluctance of the international community to put an end to the crimes committed against humanity is the main reason behind the deterioration of the situation in Syria.

The final solution for the Syrian crisis depends on an unwavering willingness on the part of the international major powers to implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. This will eventually make the negotiations between the Syrian opposition and the regime of credible value.

Ending this humanitarian catastrophe is no longer possible without undertaking the actions and making the arrangements that force the Syrian regime to implement the decisions of Geneva-1 conference, which stipulate the formation of an interim governing body with full authority, and the Security Council's resolution on which they were based.

The main harm lies in making people used to the scenes of bombing and death as everyday sights, while the international conscience wakes up from time to time shocked by the picture of the body of a child thrown on the beach after drowning in the attempt to flee for security or by the Syrian regime shelling a hospital in Aleppo, before it goes back to dormancy. Yet, the bombing, expulsion and torture continues more viciously.

We are confident that the day when the civilized world will hold itself accountable for keeping silent about this crime is not far away.

In order not to remain reticent over the aggrieved party errors, we would also state that the Syrian people after all this price which they paid deserve a unified leadership to their factions on the ground, far from the narrow interests and ideologies that do not do any good.

The dispersion and division of factions, which amount to much chaos, could not achieve a political system, democratic or non-democratic. That is why the organization, institutionalization and shouldering of national and historical responsibility by searching for a political solution that preserves the unity of Syria and the unity of its people, must be key elements in the struggle against tyranny.

Ladies and Gentlemen,,
Distinguished audience.

The growing and diverse challenges facing the world, impose on parties to conflicts to abide by the provisions of international law and international humanitarian law and to seek to ease tensions from which the world has only reaped disastrous implications to international peace and security.

Based on the firm conviction of the State of Qatar under the wise leadership of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al –Thani, to renounce the use of force and methods of pressure and coercion to resolve disputes, we uphold the need for the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, in particular through mediation, which is a priority of our foreign policy which shapes our regional and international relations that are determined in accordance with international law and principles of justice.

Distinguished audience..

The realization of the aspirations of the peoples would lead to the provision of security and socio-political stability, thus, opening the doors to the achievement of sustainable development in all its dimensions.

There is no doubt that the most important missing ring to achieve international peace, is the socio-economic base. The various forms of injustice and tyranny represented in exclusion, marginalization and suppression of freedoms, ignorance, unemployment and the blockage of the political horizon and discrimination on the basis of identity in several regions of the world, is a fertile ground for the deployment of terrorism.

The failure to reach a just settlement of the conflicts would weaken the moderate forces and augment the extremist forces in the long run, especially those that do not believe in peaceful solutions and settlement. On the other hand, the emergency treatment of the problem of terrorism by using the armed confrontation is necessary for the fire-extinguishing process. However, if you do not address the roots of terrorism and the causes of extremism, this will result in catastrophic repercussions in the future that could even be more devastating.

In this regard, we must face the double standards attitude by taking a firm stand vis-à-vis the approach depicting terrorism as being the violence committed by others, and to take position vis-à-vis state terrorism and the repressive practices carried out against unarmed civilians represented in collective punishment, indiscriminate shelling of populated areas, displacement and torture in prisons. What is happening in Palestine, Syria and Iraq is not far away from us.

State terrorism commits two crimes: the first one is against its current victims, and the second is that it produces the future terrorists.

In this sense, we must take concrete steps and a comprehensive overview which are not always restricted to security confrontations and accusation of the other but rather tend to activate the rule of law, ensure the rights of citizens and propagate the culture of reconciliation, coexistence and acceptance of others, in addition to the rejection of sectarianism, the real addressing of pressing issues such as poverty, unemployment and ignorance, which, if eliminated, extremism will be reduced to merely individual cases.

There are no magic solutions to extremism and terrorism. On the contrary, before us there would be rather difficult and arduous tasks that need patient and hard work.

Some friendly countries consider the issues of the region only from the perspective of combating terrorism and extremism, while the peoples' issues should be examined in terms of their importance per se, and in a holistic framework as this will ensure addressing the real causes of extremism and the causes behind the inclination of young people to join terrorist organizations and the exploitation of the latter to those young people.

The issues of unemployment and bridging of the avenues available for young people to self-realization, besides the absence of social justice are at the forefront of the

reasons used by terrorist organizations to recruit those young people and use them in order to reach their illegal, deplorable and condemnable goals.

The realization of the aspirations of young people by involving them in public affairs and facilitating their contribution to community service and the realization of social justice, in addition to upbringing individuals in an ambience of respect for rights to equality and elimination of racial and sectarian discrimination, is the way to eradicate extremism and plug loopholes used by terrorist organizations to attract young people them.

You may realize the importance of the issues and topics on the agenda of this session of the Forum and I am sure that the high-level participants will enrich the discussions by their in-depth views and conclusions in a manner that will be conducive to the achievement of the desired objectives of this forum.

I reiterate welcoming you to Doha and I wish you a pleasant stay and this forum every success.

Peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and His blessings...