

Welcoming Remarks by
His Excellency Professor Kantathi Suphamongkhon
39th Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
CMED Enriching the Middle East's Economic Future Conference
Doha, 12 November 2017

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me much pleasure to welcome all of you to this 12th CMED Enriching the Middle East's Economic Future Conference.

Looking at the list of speakers and attendees, this conference is diverse in the topics for discussion, as well as diverse in the countries that the participants have come from. Many of us have traveled a great distance to be here today, and our first task is to overcome jetlag. I understand that 74 countries are represented here as participants, the largest number yet in 12 years.

The topics for discussion, are designed in an out-of-box way, to ensure that participants, can exchange views, in the most comprehensive manner.

I look forward to discussions on international politics, trade and economic relations, the role of women and youth in economies, the future of sustainable energy, the problem of extremism and radicalization, digital innovation, cyber security and, for the first time in this forum, the role of Hollywood film and television productions, in the Middle East and beyond. This is the most comprehensive, and innovative agenda for discussion, I have ever seen, anywhere in the world.

CMED is unique in its ability to merge the academic world, with international negotiations, and international partnership formation. It gives unique opportunities for participants from the Middle East, to meet and interact, with participants from other parts of Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas. Participants from around the world, will learn more about the Middle East, and all participants, will learn more about numerous issues of regional and global importance, in today's world. We are here together for the next two days, in this truly global forum.

Please get to know one another. Please exchange views and imagination. It is my hope that the friendships that we create together here in Doha, and the healthy exchange of views, will contribute substantially to cross border understanding, cooperation and negotiation, into the future.

My thanks go to the excellent work of Professor Steven Spiegel, and his very able CMED team from UCLA. I have known Professor Spiegel for a very long time, since he was my professor, when I was an undergraduate student at UCLA. He introduced me to the Middle East years ago.

My thanks also go to our host, the Government of Qatar, for the excellent arrangements and support, to enable all of us to be here, and to make this conference possible.

I wish the conference much success, and I look forward to meeting as many participants from around the world, as possible.

Thank you.