

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
ALGERIA**

**STATEMENT OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR
ABDELKADER MESSAHEL,
MINISTER DELEGATE FOR MAGHREB AND
AFRICAN AFFAIRS**

(DOHA 13 JANUARY 2011)

Your Excellencies Co-Chairmen of the Forum,
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the delegation accompanying me and on my own behalf, to express to our Qatari brothers our heartfelt gratitude for the generous hospitality and friendly attention extended to us since our arrival to Qatar, a country very dear to us.

I would like to pay a particular tribute to our Co-Chairmen⁷ Their Excellencies Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani and Lawrence Cannon for the impetus they have given to the work of our Forum and for the avenues they have opened for its revitalization.

I also congratulate the National Human Rights Commission of Qatar and the Arab Democracy Foundation, together with the Canadian Research Center for International Development for the exemplary manner in which they organized fruitful exchanges with civil society organizations.

As the world is going through an economic, financial, food and climate crisis and the international community, is seeking to define new ways to tackle present and future challenges, our Forum deserves praise for stressing the need to address the issues pertaining to relations between the state, the economic sphere and civil society, all the more so because, these issues are of concern not only to the countries represented here, but also to all countries and to the international community as a whole.

The crisis has, indeed, brought to light the serious flaws of a globalization marked by insufficient and even absence of regulation and synergies between these three spheres, the consequence being the inability to prevent or bring under control the drifts that entail severe repercussion on social and economic conditions in the world, particularly in the developing countries.

This crisis, having brought to the fore the need to rethink organizational and management schemes at the national and international level, highlights the relevance of the themes that we are discussing here.

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We therefore attach great interest to the exchanges of experiences which take place in the framework of this innovative Forum since its inception. They have informed the process of reforms undertaken with a view to enhancing the mobilization of civil society's potential and in particular the private sector, the youth, and women to promote stability and economic and social development in our region.

Having restored her constitutional institutions and implemented the policy of national reconciliation, Algeria, for its part, worked to consolidate the rule of law, based on the promotion of human rights, political pluralism and freedom of expression. These actions allowed the society to assume fully and freely its right to expression and to be an actor in the deepening of reforms. In this context Algeria has accorded high priority to putting in place the framework and the tools of a participatory and inclusive process underpinned by a vision whereby the State, the public and private economic sector and civil society complement each other.

We consider this approach as the most suitable way to achieve the goal of placing the human being at the center of the development process, as its driving force and core beneficiary. For this, we strive to give to the concept of citizenry its full meaning and scope, going well beyond the status of simple subject and user in government process and services, to also cover the legitimate aspirations of the human being to be the maker and responsible of his individual destiny and that of the collectivity.

The efforts aiming at the full participation of the citizens to the development process are multi-pronged.

The structuring and development of the N.G.O's are encouraged through training programs and government financing to help them become active partners in the design of development policies and social programs, their implementation and evaluation.

This policy has already resulted in the existence in Algeria of a dense and diversified NGO's network. Among the examples of this vitality, let me mention the national self-assessment of political, economic and corporate governance and socioeconomic development which was undertaken in the framework of the African Peer Review Mechanism. This process was conducted with the full participation of representatives of all the components of civil society within the National Commission on Governance; their contributions were of high quality and were reflected in the National Self-Assessment Report and subsequently in the National Plan on Governance which was designed on the basis of the conclusions and recommendations of the self-assessment.

Let me also refer to the bipartite (State-trade Unions), and tripartite (State, Employers, Trade Unions) structures of concertation whose role is now a well-established tradition

and which elaborated the National Economic and Social Pact, thus contributing to giving to social dialogues the role of a pillar in the development process.

Furthermore, the National Economic and Social Council and various sectoral and specialized Councils are largely open to civil society as fully-fledged participants to their work; this is another testimony of the will of the public authorities to benefit from views and suggestions that are diversified and have credibility. At the local level also, Algeria has clearly opted for dialogue and concertation between the local authorities and civil society; such dialogue and concertation are indispensable to better tackle economic and social problems in the municipal and provincial territories.

Through all these channels, civil society has amply demonstrated its capacity to generate innovative ideas and proposals which contributed to the evolution of public policies and programs to be more responsive to citizens' expectations.

Further deepening of the participation of civil society will be one of the main aspects of the review underway of the Law on NGO's and the Municipal and Provincial Bills.

Algeria seeks to consolidate the progress already achieved, which was facilitated by extensive awareness thanks to the high level of education and culture reached by the Algerian society.

Aware of the strategic role of education for political, economic and social development, Algeria has, from the early days of independence, implemented a policy of generalization of compulsory and free of charge education. To reap fully the fruits of this policy, Algeria has launched for the last decade the reform of education, whose design was made with the participation of civil society, and covers all the cycles of education.

We have reached today an advanced stage in the implementation of this goal reform of education. Beyond access to basic education which is already achieved for all girls as well as boys, and the increasing high rate of university students, the put-pose is to better implement the qualitative adaptations required to respond to the challenges of national development of opening up to-the world in an ever changing context.

The interest accorded to the youth has also materialized through the setting up of a variety of schemes to promote diverse means of integration in the labour market, and circuits of the economy.

This experience bears already significant results, as can be seen in the market decrease of unemployment, and the setting up of numerous small businesses, we are endeavoring to use these schemes as levers to develop entrepreneurship.

It is for this same purpose that Algeria has launched a sizeable development program for the benefit of the small and medium enterprises sector. Existing small and medium enterprises are supported through modernization and management enhancement programs. Incentives are also available to facilitate the setting up of new S.M.E's.

The overarching objective of this program is to help the enterprise, and in particular the private sector, to play its role as the engine of growth, particularly by diversifying economic activity and generating productive jobs.

Multifaceted efforts are also pursued in order for Algerian women to participate actively in political, economic and social life and, by so doing, unlocking their creative potential for the benefit of society.

The amendments brought into the constitution, the family code and the citizenship code as well as other legal and institutional measures are all part and parcel of our unrelenting attachment to fulfill the principle of citizens equality.

In the fields of access to education, employment, and to administrative, managerial or political responsibilities, the place of women is increasing at a rapid pace.

We are therefore resolutely within the universal movement of rehabilitation of women and full realization of their rights and role in society.

Allow me now to refer to some of the challenges which confront our region and the world and deserves due attention by our forum.

As you all know, the Arab world is keen to strengthen regional stability which is also a key factor of world stability and works relentlessly in favour of peace and cooperation.

The Arab Peace Initiative which received the consensus of the international community is a clear example of this Arab stand favoring peace. This consensus continues to be hampered by the intransigence of Israel which results in a climate of tension and grave threats to the security and stability in the region.

There is, therefore, an urgent need for the international community to act more decisively to allow the Palestinian people to recover his national rights, including the establishment of its sovereign State, on the occupied lands, with Al Qods as its Capital, it is only appropriate, here, for us to call on our G8 partners to put all their clout to do justice to the Palestinian people and thus Lay the foundations of lasting peace in the region.

Terrorism is also a common concern for all of us. In this regard, and in the context of their contribution to the fight against this scourge of universal scope, the countries of the neighborhood have put in place a framework of coordination and joint action to counter the attempts by terrorist groups to establish a lasting presence in the region in the region of the Sahel.

This regional undertaking should be encouraged and receive effective backing. Indeed, the countries concerned require strengthened cooperation on the part of the international community in the fields of training, , of logistical support , the provision of specific equipment and of intelligence sharing as well as unwavering mobilization to criminalize the payment of ransoms that constitute one of the main sources of financing terrorism . It is also important for this cooperation by the international community to be accompanied by intensified action to promote socio-economic development in the zones concerned to help in preventing the expansion of various cells of organized crime with which, as we all know, terrorist groups establish strong links.

Let me also say that everyday, we witness in various parts of the world the rise of intolerance, xenophobia and various forms of extremism. This phenomenon starkly highlights the need to come up with responses consistent with our humanistic shared values.

Each of our countries must spare no effort at the national level to prevent and fight these recurring scourges which erect artificial barriers to divide the human society.

In the same vein, the dialogue between the civilizations, religions and cultures is of crucial importance and we have to join all our efforts to bring it forward so that the ideals of understanding between the peoples and harmony between the nations can thrive on lasting foundations.

Our Forum has great potential to contribute to a better understanding between the peoples of the countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa and those of the 68 countries, which is its very "raison d'être".

I am confident that our present session in Doha will continue to enrich our discussions and programs in this direction.

Thank you.