

Unofficial Translation

The Address of His Highness

Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani
Amir of the State of Qatar

at

The Opening Session of
the Second Summit of Arab &
South American States

Doha

March 31, 2009

In the name of God,
the Most Merciful, The Most Compassionate

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Your Majesties, Excellencies and Highnesses,
Your Excellency the Secretary General of the Arab
League,
Honourable Guests,

We are pleased with this meeting between the Arab world and South America, and we consider it a symbol and embodiment of a timely idea.

The peoples of the Arab world have and are following up the economic, social, cultural and political development that the people of this great continent are achieving through a rough road the course of which appears to be clear, successful and able to fulfill their aspirations.

We highly appreciate the efforts and burdens borne by them in order to attain this degree of progress. We also feel that there are similarities and convergences between the Latin world and our Arab world.

Both have old civilizations, both have a culture of multi sources and both have the ambition to achieve a decent future.

Moreover, both are facing impediments and complications on the road to progress that are similar in aspect and in causes.

Dear Guests,

We know that many of our young people are acquainted with the work of your great artists in all areas of culture, formative art, literature, poetry and novel.

Furthermore, we know that many waves of Arab migration have reached you and remained in your hospitality and carried with them forms and types of the Arab culture.

We believe that these waves are bridges for renewable and fertile relations.

We know that there have been earlier efforts to build these bridges based on the dreams of the first founders of the Asian–African Solidarity Movement; and have sought to achieve collaboration among the three continents by moving closer to South America.

Yet, some of these efforts failed for many reasons?international and regional.

We believe that some of these efforts were premature, especially during the Cold War era. But now as circumstances have changed we find that the way is clear to build new bridges, including in our opinion the cultural bridge between our cultures based on our common heritage from the impact of the rich experience of the Iberian Peninsula that lasted for centuries.

All of these links and the common hopes and inter–related cultures that are not far apart can form a solid base on which we can confidently build and can deepen and consolidate the idea symbolized and embodied by your meeting here.

Dear Guests,

We wish that your meeting and your efforts will help fulfill your aspirations and ours. It is also an honor for Doha to host this meeting.

I welcome you and May Peace, God's mercy and blessings, be upon you.

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