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Unofficial Translation

Address by  
**His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani**  
**Amir of the State of Qatar**

At  
**The General Debate of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session**  
**of the United Nations General Assembly**

New York  
19 September 2017

*In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful,*

**Honorable Audience,**

It pleases me to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák on assuming the tasks of President of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Assembly, wishing him every success in his mission.

I wish also to express my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Peter Thomson for his valuable efforts in managing the affairs of the 71st Session of the General Assembly, and I take this opportunity to commend the efforts of His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, to strengthen the role of the United Nations.

**Mr. President,**

Maintaining the regional and international peace and security is a priority in the State of Qatar's foreign policy, whose principles and objectives are based on the United Nations Charter and the rules of international legality which calls for constructive cooperation among States, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs, good neighborliness, as well as promoting peaceful coexistence and pursuing peaceful means to settle disputes.

The issue of settling of disputes by peaceful means is still being addressed as an episodic and non-binding proposal. Perhaps the time has come to impose dialogue and negotiation as a basis for resolving disputes through concluding an international convention on settling disputes between States by peaceful means.

In this context, and after major events such as the Second World War, Rwanda & Burundi and the Balkans in the last century, the danger of the impunity of perpetrators of crimes against humanity and crimes of genocide has come back again to threaten humanity to become the rule rather than the exception, because the international legitimacy is subjected to political pressures, interests of the axes and dictations of force on the ground, which could be a harbinger that the law of force may supersede the force of law.

In our view, the position of the major powers should not range between two extremes: the direct occupation to impose the will and policy on other countries, or standing idly in a spectator's position who refrain from doing anything vis-à-vis wars of genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated by a fascist despotic regime, or a continuous repression by an occupying state of people under occupation.

Lately a feeling is spreading that peoples who are exposed to repression face their fate alone, as if the international arena is governed by the law of the jungle, and that the countries under

threat have to stand on their own through their alliances and relations, in the absence of a system to implement the provisions of international law, and the binding conventions and charters.

**Mr. President,**

We commend opting for the theme of this session: “Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet.”

In this context, I call upon the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the international community to assume their legal and moral responsibility to take the necessary measures to stop the violence against Rohingya minority, provide them with protection, repatriate the displaced to their homeland, prevent sectarian or ethnic discrimination against them, and ensure that they have their full legitimate rights as full-fledged citizens, and we urge all States to provide humanitarian assistance to them.

**Mr. President,**

Every time I stand here I speak in favor of constructive international cooperation, just peace, the rights of peoples under occupation, as well as those who are subjected to crimes against humanity and those who are under siege.

This time, I stand here while my country and my people are subjected to a continuing and unjust blockade imposed since June 5th by neighboring countries. The blockade involves all aspects of life, including the intervention by these countries to sever family ties. Qatar is currently managing successively its living, economy, development plans and its outreach to the outside world, thanks to sea and air routes that these countries have no control over.

The blockade was imposed abruptly and without warning, prompting Qataris to consider it as a kind of betrayal.

It seems that those who planned and implemented it had envisaged that their move would cause a shocking and direct impact that will bring the State of Qatar to its knees and to capitulate to a total tutelage to be imposed on it.

And what is worse, the blockade planners found it necessary to rely on fabricated quotes attributed to me and posted on the website of Qatar News Agency after hacking it. The mobilized and guided media of these countries was ready to launch an all-out campaign of incitement prepared in advance in which all values, morals and norms were breached, and the truth was infringed by a torrent of lies. Funds are still being spent unsparingly on the machine of faking and disseminating fabrications in the hope of fooling people by distorting the truth with lies.

Despite the exposure of the hacking and falsification of quotes of the Amir of a sovereign State, the blockading countries did not back down or apologize for lying, but rather intensified their campaign, in the hope that the blockade would cause a cumulative effect on the economy and the society of my country, after it failed to bring about any direct impact.

The perpetrators of the hacking and the falsification of the quotes have committed an assault against a sovereign State. The crime was deliberately committed for political aims, and was followed by a list of political dictations, which contravene sovereignty, and caused worldwide astonishment.

This disgraceful act has once again raised international queries about digital security and the unruliness in cybercrime and electronic piracy.

It also revealed the anxiety of a lot of public and official circles in the world over the absence of clear-cut international legislations and institutions to organize this dangerous and vital field and punish the perpetrators of transnational crimes.

It is time now to take steps in this regard, and we are ready to put our potentials to serve such joint effort.

The countries who imposed the unjust blockade on Qatar have intervened in the internal affairs of the State by putting pressure on its citizens through foodstuffs, medicine and ripping off consanguineous relations to force them change their political affiliation to destabilize a sovereign country. Isn't this one of the definitions of terrorism?

This illegal blockade was not confined to the economic aspect and the breach of the WTO Agreement, but it exceeded that to violate the human rights conventions by the arbitrary measures that have caused social, economic and religious harm to thousands of citizens and residents of the GCC countries, due to the violation of the basic human rights to work, education, freedom of movement and the right to dispose of private property.

However, things did not stop at this point, but the blockading countries went beyond that to persecute their own citizens and residents of their territory and imposing penalties of imprisonment and fines on them for the mere expression of their sympathy with Qatar, even if that was on the social media, in a precedent never seen before in the world, in violation of the human rights conventions and agreements that guarantee the right of everyone to freedom of opinion and expression of ideas.

There are countries that permit themselves not only to attack a neighboring country to dictate its foreign and media policy, but also believe that their possession of funds qualifies them to put pressure and blackmail other countries to participate in their aggression, while they are supposed to be held accountable internationally for what they have done.

The countries who imposed the blockade on the State of Qatar interfere in the internal affairs of many countries, and accuse all those who oppose them domestically and abroad with terrorism. By doing so, they are inflicting damage on the war on terror, while at the same time opposing reform and supporting the tyrannical regimes in our region, in whose prisons terrorists are initiated.

We were not alone to be taken by surprise by the imposition of the blockade, as many countries whose leaders have questioned its motives and reasons were also taken by surprise. The blockading countries have promised all those who asked them about the reasons of the blockade to provide them with evidence of their anti-Qatar absurd allegations and fabrications, which kept changing according to the identity of the addressee. Everyone is still waiting for evidence that did not and will not arrive, because it does not exist. In contrast, these allegations contradict a lot of evidence about Qatar's contribution to the fight against terrorism, which is recognized by the entire international community.

The State of Qatar has fought terrorism - the whole international community bears witness to that - and it is still fighting it and will continue to do that. It stands in the camp of those who are fighting by security means, and believes that it is necessary to fight it ideologically as well. It goes beyond that to participate in draining its sources through providing education to seven million children around the world, so that they do not fall prey to ignorance and radical ideas.

We have refused to yield to dictations by pressure and siege, and our people was not satisfied by less than that. At the same time, we have taken an open attitude towards dialogue without dictation, and have expressed our readiness to resolve differences through compromises based on common undertakings. Resolving conflicts by peaceful means is actually one of the priorities of our foreign policy. From here, I renew the call for an unconditional dialogue based on mutual respect for sovereignty and I highly value the sincere and appreciated mediation that the State of Qatar has supported since the beginning, and which was initiated by my brother, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the sisterly State of Kuwait. I also thank all the countries that have supported this mediation.

Allow me, on this occasion and from this podium, to express my pride in my Qatari people, along with the multinational and multicultural residents in Qatar.

The people have withstood the conditions of siege, and rejected the dictations with resolve and pride, and insisted on the independence of Qatar's sovereign decision, and strengthened its unity and solidarity, and maintained their refined manners and their progress despite the fierceness of the campaign against them and their country.

I reiterate my thanks to the sisterly and friendly countries which recognize the significance of respecting the sovereignty of States and the rules of international law, for their appreciated stances which were, and still are, supportive of the Qatari people during this crisis.

**Mr. President,**

Terrorism and extremism are among the most serious challenges facing the world. Countering them require us all to carry out a concerted action against terrorist organizations and their extremist ideology in order to maintain security for humanity and stability for the world.

The governments of the world have no choice but to cooperate in the security confrontation with terrorism, but halting the initiation of terrorism and extremism could be achieved by addressing its social, political and cultural root causes.

We must also be careful not to make the fight against terrorism an umbrella for reprisals or shelling of civilians.

The fight against terrorism and extremism was and will continue to be our highest priority. This is affirmed by the effective participation of the State of Qatar in the regional and international efforts through the implementation of the measures included in the United Nations strategy adopted in 2006, and the implementation of all the Security Council resolutions and measures related to the fight against terrorism and its financing and through the participation in the International Coalition, regional organizations and bilateral relations with the United States and many countries of the world. The State of Qatar will continue its regional and international efforts in this regard and will develop them.

While reaffirming our condemnation of all forms of extremism and terrorism, we reject tackling this phenomenon with double standards according to the identity of the perpetrators, or by linking it with any particular religion, race, civilization, culture or society.

**Mr. President,**

The issues of the Middle East continue to pose the greatest threat to international peace and security, due to the vital importance of this region to the world.

Israel still stands in the way of achieving a lasting, just and comprehensive peace and rejects the Arab Peace initiative. The Israeli government continues its intransigent approach and strategy to create facts on the ground through expanding settlement construction in the occupied territories, Judaizing Jerusalem and restricting the performance of religious rituals in Al-Aqsa Mosque, which is a serious provocative act, and continuing its blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The international community must give high priority to the resumption of peace negotiations on the basis of ending the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories within a specified time frame and reaching a just, comprehensive and final settlement in accordance with the two-state solution agreed upon by the international community, based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace initiative.

This will only be achieved through the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on the basis of 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital.

I renew my appeal to the Palestinian brothers to complete national reconciliation and unify positions and words in confronting the dangers and challenges facing the Palestinian cause and the future of the Palestinian people.

**Mr. President,**

The international community remains unable to find a solution to the Syrian crisis despite its consequences and serious repercussions on the region and the world. Political efforts continue to falter due to the conflicting international and regional interests, this confliction is conducive to protect those against whom we are supposed to stand united.

The international community relinquishes its legal and moral responsibilities, including the implementation of its decisions, in submission to the logic of force. What is required is to work seriously to reach a political solution to the Syrian crisis in a way that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people for justice, dignity and freedom, and maintains the unity and sovereignty of Syria, in accordance with the Geneva-1 decisions.

Qatar will spare no effort in providing support and assistance to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of our Syrian brothers and to implement our humanitarian pledges within the framework of the United Nations.

The international community has given up the task of protecting civilians. Will it also hesitate to hold war criminals accountable? Their impunity would have dire consequences on the situation in Syria and the region, which would affect the behavior of future dictatorships towards their peoples in the absence of any deterrent.

On the Libyan issue, Libya's national consensus - which would preserve Libya's unity, sovereignty and social fabric, and restore its stability - could be achieved by means of combining domestic and international efforts. We must all intensify efforts and support the Government of National Accord, which has been established with the support of United Nations, in its efforts to restore stability, counter terrorism and its grave consequences.

The State of Qatar has supported international mediation efforts and will support them in the future to achieve the aspirations of the Libyan people.

Concerning the brotherly Iraq, we support the efforts of the Iraqi government in its endeavor to achieve security, stability and unity of the territory and people of Iraq. We commend its achievements in its fight against terrorism, and affirm the necessary support to it by the State

of Qatar to complement these victories by realizing the aspirations of the people of Iraq to equality among its citizens and restore its role at the regional and international levels.

Concerning Yemen, we affirm the importance of maintaining Yemen's unity, security and stability, and ending the state of infighting and war and adopting dialogue, political solution and national reconciliation as a basis for ending this crisis and implementing the Security Council resolution 2216.

We call upon the international community to facilitate the access of humanitarian assistance to various Yemeni regions. The State of Qatar supports the efforts of the UN envoy to end this crisis and realize the aspirations of the brotherly Yemeni people in unity, security and stability.

In order to achieve security and stability in the Gulf region, we renew the call that we have already launched from this podium, for conducting a constructive dialogue between the GCC countries and Iran on the basis of common interests, the principle of good neighborliness, respect for the sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

**Mr. President,**

Within the framework of the international efforts to tackle the humanitarian crises, the State of Qatar has continued to contribute to the response to the growing humanitarian needs in the world. We have increased our financial contributions to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to enable the United Nations to implement UN programs and provide humanitarian relief to those in need worldwide. Today the State of Qatar ranks third on the list of major donors in 2017 to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

We have continued to provide support to countries facing challenges to help them implement their development plans. It is worth mentioning here that the State of Qatar ranked first in the Arab world and 33rd in the world in the field of human development. This proves the effectiveness of our humanitarian and development policy. We look forward to achieving the goals of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, which we have all committed to realize.

In conclusion, we reiterate that the State of Qatar will spare no effort in working to strengthen the role and efforts of the United Nations to achieve what the international community seeks in regard to peace and security, and to promote human rights and advance development. Qatar will remain, as is always the case, a safe haven for the oppressed, and will continue its mediation efforts to find just solutions in conflict zones.

**Thank you, and may Allah's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.**