



The Inaugural Speech of

His Highness
Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani
The Amir of Qatar

on Becoming the Amir

26th June 2013

In the name of God

The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

On behalf of all of you and my own behalf I extend to His Highness The Father all thanks and appreciation for his leading our country over eighteen-years with wisdom, vision, and diligent work for the benefit of his people and to raise the stature of his country.

His Highness has raised our name high. During his term of office our country has derived its strength from doing good, supporting the aggrieved party, and worked out reconciliations. His Highness The Father has managed to achieve a quiet, gradual and comprehensive revolution in all aspects of the State of Qatar, without exception: investment, economy, media, culture, foreign policy, education, health, sports and environment; to make in a few years a true miracle in this region, and provide a unique paradigm for its peoples.

We take great pride in recording that the reign of His Highness represents a milestone in the history of Qatar.

His Highness enjoys all this love, popularity, and special status, that we all keep for him in our hearts, thanks to his massive accomplishments and dedication in serving his country and his nation, and because of his unique personality combining wisdom and passion, as well as good planning and management on the one hand, and distinct spontaneity on the other.

His Highness The Father assumed the leadership of Qatar, when the State was stuck in the past and was unable to rise, develop and invest its wealth. It suffered from weak infrastructure and a relatively modest standard of living.

His Highness The Father has laid out a project for reform and development that included his vision as a leader and his boundless confidence in the people of this country. It was a calculated risk-taking boldness. Qatar would not have been able to make all these achievements and lay down the infrastructure for the oil and gas industry, without this boldness.

He left office in a unique, or rather unprecedented step, with upright stature, after Qatar has become a developed country, with modern facilities and institutions, where per capita income has reached the highest levels in the world.

HH The Father has left his position and Qatar is more like a non-stop construction site, and its political and economic relations are manifold, balanced and growing, its community is safe and stable and crime is virtually non-existent.

Qatar has transformed from a State that some people could barely know its location on the map to a major player in politics, economy, media, culture and sport worldwide.

This new reality could be dazzling and may lead some to lose their balance as a result of the eloquent praise and flattery; on the other hand it may stir envy among the envious who may offend Qatar and its people in an unfair and slanderous manner. We must not lapse into any of the two extreme attitudes, since what is more important in Qatar's new international and regional position is that it has transferred Qatar from a State struggling to survive and grow to a State of a solid and confident stature. We must take advantage of this status and benefit others too.

We must avoid arrogance; because the modesty with which the Qatari people are known, is an attribute of the strong who are self-confident. Vanity leads to mistakes.

HH The Father decided to end his reign while he can give his best. He also wanted to translate his words into actions, especially his words about the necessities of change and succession of generations. He handed over the banner to me as an expression of confidence in his Heir Apparent. I hope to be worthy of this trust, and to be able to continue the path laid out by this man who is actually the builder of the modern State of Qatar and the pioneer of its awakening.

Good governance in any country is made by justice, honesty and good example. God has said in the Holy Quran: "Allah commands you to render back the trusts to those to whom they are due and that when you judge between men you judge with justice." and He says, "Allah commands justice, and the doing of good and liberality to kith and kin and forbids indecency, and injustice, and wrongful transgression. He admonished you that you may recall," He also said: "O ye who believe! Why do you say what you do not do? Most hateful is it in the sight of Allah that you say what you don't do."

Destiny has entrusted me with a great responsibility. God is my witness, I have acted as dictated by the duty of the mandate as the Heir Apparent, and my conscience.

Now, I am responding to the call of duty to carry the banner with pride on the path of glory of great ancestors.

In 2008, to pursue the march of reform and modernity, we drew up a road map for the future of the country under the title: "Qatar National Vision 2030", which is aimed at transforming Qatar in 2030 to an advanced country capable of achieving sustainable development, and ensuring a continued and decent standard of living for its people.

The national vision provides a generalised framework for developing comprehensive national strategies and plans to implement them, with emphasis on striking a balance between the achievements that realise economic growth, and the country's human and natural resources.

It is natural that we put the interests of Qatar and the Qatari people on top of our priorities.

This includes humans, society, economy, politics, and cultural identity. At the same time, we have to bear in mind that there is no identity without belonging to wider circles.

We are part of the Arabian Gulf region, and part of the Arab world, and the Islamic world. We are also a part of humanity and the international community.

Changing the person of the Amir in the State of Qatar does not mean that the challenges and tasks for the State have changed, because Qatar has, thank God, become a State of institutions; and every ministry, institution and a public body has to carry out its functions as per the law, regardless of the person who runs it.

The realities on the ground have not changed, and the investment challenge in the oil and gas industry, and the infrastructure still exists. The challenge to diversify the sources of income and reliable investment for the benefit of future generations is also still there.

We still face the challenge of development, and I mean first and foremost the development of humans, who are our most valuable asset. Investment in education, health, infrastructure etc., is associated with this, and this is the benchmark to measure our success in development.

We will continue, dear Brothers, our keenness on advancing the national economy, developing services, constructing public facilities, and upgrading youth and sports sector. Also we will give an attentive care to our investment for future generations, and diversify the sources of income of the State of Qatar.

We would timely declare plans on restructuring the ministries to reduce duplication, and in order to place all public domains under the responsibility of well-defined and specific ministries. It is a project we started last year under the rule of the Father Amir, and we will continue to work on and apply it.

Development and high living standards are not possible without economic growth. This is a self-evident argument. But when it comes to human development, then the issue wouldn't be limited to the concept of growth as an increase in the rate of per capita income, but it becomes the improvement of his performance, the nobility of his values, his seriousness, work

productivity and devotion to the homeland. Without all these what is the worth of wealth? Wealth without all these may corrupt the individual, and create a dependent and non-productive individual.

Hence, the measure of our success in education and development is not confined to what we invest in these domains, but also in the outputs that we can achieve.

We will continue to invest in these sectors, but we'll be more tough and clear on the results and outputs.

Why do I say this, brothers? Because we cannot develop the humans without developing health, education, culture and sports fields, which are in turn cannot be developed without investing effort and money. But if we made big investments and did not get the suitable results, then we should not condone that, because here harm would occur instead of benefits.

And how we couldn't achieve results if we invested all that is necessary' Only if there is poor planning or mismanagement, in short, poor performance, and if incorrect reports are presented, among other things that may not be covered up, and needed to be addressed promptly, otherwise we would be like those who corrupt the society and the institutions by squandering money.

What applies to the outputs applies also to appointments. No one shall regard himself as having the right to be appointed in an office or a public position without carrying out his duties towards the society and the state.

No need to confirm that Qatar respects its international and regional obligations. The leadership of Qatar is known for its commitment to even its verbal promises, as well as the covenants and treaties.

But there is something deeper than all this, we are people who are committed to our principles and values. We do not live on the sidelines of life, and we do not go adrift without a destination, we are not subservient waiting guidance from anyone.

This independent pattern of behaviour has become factual in Qatar and to those who deal with us. We are people with visions.

With regard to international relations, the future of the region, the brotherly relations, neighbourliness and friendship, we proceed from the interests of our country and its people as part of the Arab world, as well as the Arab and Islamic nations.

The State of Qatar has ties of fraternity and cooperation with the Arab brothers, namely, the Gulf Cooperation Council, which we seek to enhance our relationship with to the highest possible levels of integration.

In this context, Qatar is committed to its obligations toward Arab solidarity and cooperation within the frameworks of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League and their institutions, and do everything possible to help the Arab brothers when necessary. It is committed to the national issues, Arab national security, and respecting the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all Arab countries. Qatar is committed to the solidarity with the brotherly Palestinian people in their struggle to achieve their legitimate rights, and consider the realisation of these rights a condition for a just peace, which includes the Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem, the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, and the right of return for refugees. No settlement without a just peace.

"Qatar would remain a refuge for the oppressed", these words were uttered by the founder of the State Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohammad Bin Thani, and have been reiterated by His Highness The Father. We would remain faithful to this pledge of supporting the aggrieved.

We are a State, people and a coherent society, we are not a political party. This is why we strive to maintain relationships with all governments and nations, we also respect all sincere, effective and active political trends in the region, but we are not supportive of one trend against another.

We are Muslims and Arabs, respect the diversity of religious schools of thought and respect all religions in our countries and abroad. As Arabs we

reject dividing Arab societies on sectarian or doctrinal basis, because this affects their social and economic immunity and prevents its modernisation and development on the basis of citizenship, regardless of religion, sect or religious thoughts, and because this split allows outside powers to intervene in internal Arab issues and have influence over them.

We have established cooperation relations based on common interests and mutual respect with many countries of the world in the West and the East, in America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and in the region. There is no alternative to the common interests and mutual respect in relations between countries. This in the end is our indispensable yardstick, we proceed from our principles, interests and dignity.

Yes, the State of Qatar has aligned itself with the issues of the Arab peoples and their aspiration to live freely and with dignity away from corruption and despotism.

We have not created these aspirations. Rejection of despotism and humiliation requires looking forward to freedom, and dignity.

Much work awaits us all. Many occasions would bring us together to discuss the issues of our country, which we treasure.

But allow me in conclusion, on behalf of all of you and my own behalf, to present my profound thanks and gratitude to the knight who dismounted and wish him and all those who worked faithfully with him in serving this country, good health and longevity, and I ask him not to deny us of his opinion and advice when necessary.

May God's Peace, Blessings and Mercy be upon you all.