

WELCOMING REMARKS

**BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY SHEIKH HAMAD BIN JASSIM BIN JABR AL-THANI**

**PRIME MINISTER  
AND  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE STATE OF QATAR**

**AT THE DOHA FORUM XII**

**DOHA  
20 MAY 2012**

In the name of God the Compassionate the Merciful,

My Lord, Your Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Distinguished Guests,

I am pleased to welcome you all for coming to Doha to be a part of the Doha Forum XII and the Enriching the Middle East's Economic Future Conference. Your distinguished presence is an expression of your interest in the issues on its agenda, which the Forum has been examining for more than a decade. As you may have noticed, those issues focus on matters of critical concern to human relations at the national, regional and international levels, and are open for free, responsible and constructive dialogue so business rules could be developed to achieve the benefits sought by everyone.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Distinguished Guests,

There is no doubt that the most significant characteristics of the current political period of our region are the strength and effectiveness of the broad popular demands for reform, that have been the driving force behind the Arab revolutions. That is the reason why that strong popular movement has been yearning for the rule of law, the respect for freedoms, the elimination of corruption and the consolidation of socio-economic development. These issues are interrelated and interdependent. We therefore hope that discussions would be comprehensive in nature, analytically accurate and based on objective criticism in order to reach an outcome that we can feasibly invest in at the regional level.

The Middle East confronts today serious challenges: from identifying the means to introduce reforms, to creating the conducive conditions to peace and stability and to building a new community life at the national level once situations have changed. When we add to all this the apparent failure thus far in ending well-known conflicts based on peaceful settlement under international law, notably the question of Palestine, we can get an idea of the magnitude of the challenges we face. It is imperative therefore to acknowledge that achieving reforms and development, as well as peace, security and stability, requires cooperation and solidarity in order to realize the common human interest.

You may have recently been following the developments of the global financial crisis that hit America and the European countries in September 2008, and its adverse economic effects that still cast dark shadows on the global economic system and the future of peoples in both developed and developing countries. All indicators project that the global economy is on the verge of a new crisis due to declining growth rates in most of the countries of the European Union, the slowdown in the US economic growth, and the depression that threaten the emerging economies, which in turn would inevitably have negative effect on the developing countries. We are faced with serious economic and political challenges that require taking options based on sound decisions and effective mechanisms.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Distinguished Guests,

It is now my honor to invite the sponsor of the Forum, under whose auspices it has been supported and embraced since its very beginning, and thanks to whom the Forum has become a success story, my Lord His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, to declare open the Doha Forum XII.