

**Speech of  
His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al-  
Thani, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar,  
during his visit to Germany**

June 17, 2003

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Dear Dr. Zöpel,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here with you and I wish to thank you for your presence.

I wish also to thank the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung for organising this meeting and for giving me the opportunity to talk to you about the policy of the State of Qatar, about its principles and the targets we are aiming at in this very difficult and complicated phase of history. Not only our region in the Gulf and the Middle East is going through intricately complex times, but also the whole world, due to the terrible events we experienced in the recent past, in particular, however, the terrorist attacks of September 11th on the United States and the recent war in Iraq.

Ladies and gentlemen!

The principles of foreign policy of the State of Qatar are based on solid foundations originating from our own convictions that we have attained and in which we believe, and that we firmly try to apply in our regional and international relationships. We always call for refraining from the use of force and violence. We appeal rather to international law and diplomatic means in the settlement of disputes and crises between countries. We are always eager to establish our foreign relationships on mutual respect and being good neighbours, for the sake of common benefit among nations. Above all, we respect diversity of opinions and convictions, the plurality of convictions, and the right of nations and countries, regardless how large or small, to self-determination. We support the realisation of any country's free selection of its political, economical and social structures in a manner that is compatible with its own faith, convictions, traditions, and noble ideals.

We have to acknowledge that our belief in human rights is foremost, and in the end originating from our belief in God, to Whom belongs might and majesty and his heavenly commissions that he has given to humanity.

Starting from these solid principles, we consider the achieving of security, stability, and peace in the region and for all of its countries and nations to possess utmost priority in our

foreign policy. In this regard, we of course have to mention our close relationships and bonds with friendly countries all over the world of which we are proud. In this very context I wish to underline the importance that we give to the tight bonds and common interests which we have with the Federal Republic of Germany. Furthermore I wish to point out the priority that we give to the development of these bonds and to the promotion of all fields of common interests and mutual benefit.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Iraq war occurred and is now over. The Iraqi regime fell. There is now no more sense in discussing its causes and reasons. The urgent need now is to concentrate on the necessary evaluation of its results and to determine what needs to happen in order to deal with these results. There is the need to guarantee that the outcome will have a positive impact on Iraq itself in particular and on the whole region in general.

In our opinion, the post-war phase in Iraq will be determined by two main factors: the first one is the situation in Iraq and its further development. The second one is the peace process in the Middle East and the possibility of success in finding a solution.

As to the situation in Iraq, it is important now to win the peace politically after winning the war militarily. What I mean by this is the need to accelerate humanitarian aid, to bring life back to a normal course, and to relieve the sufferings of the Iraqi people, making them able to restart a normal life in dignity, security, and stability. Moreover, we stress the necessity to start the rebuilding and rehabilitation of Iraq, to give the Iraqi people their natural right of self-determination, and the capacity to elect their political leadership freely and democratically, thereby preserving the unity and safety of the territories and boundaries. This needs to occur by going back to international legitimacy and by affirming the vital role of the United Nations, thus enabling the new Iraqi government to gain the required legitimacy and creditability in the Arab world, regionally and internationally. In my view, if this takes place quickly and successfully, the Iraq example could be applied to the whole region. And if this would not transpire rapidly, this would mean the contrary, since failure to realise that would necessarily mean the failure of the war to achieve the desired goals. The predicament in Iraq would then be a negative example having a negative impact on the whole region.

As to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the peace process, things are distinct. It is important to put an end to the spiral of violence and to support the efforts to reanimate the peace process and to turn back to the negotiation table on the basis of the Road Map. In our opinion the Road Map is an appropriate basis on which to achieve the historically targeted settlement. Prerequisite to a just settlement is the exact fulfilment of all articles. This means ending the Israeli occupation, establishment of the sovereign Palestinian State within the framework of internationally recognised boundaries with Jerusalem as its capital, removal of the settlements, and a fair solution for the Palestinian refugees by giving them the right to return home or by granting them compensations in accordance with UN resolutions. The peace process must also include Syria and Lebanon as stipulated in the respective UN resolutions. After that we shall be in the position to talk about a permanent, just, and comprehensive peace in the region. Hereby, all countries and nations in the region shall have the right to live

in security, peace, freedom, and democracy, upholding normal relationships of co-operation and co-existence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the meantime we see ourselves confronted with other serious problems and crises in the region. We urgently need the implementation of reforms and modernisation, and we strive for comprehensive developments in all political, economical, social and cultural fields. This, of course, requires the establishment of democracy and the participation of the masses in government and policy making, in establishing administrative and governmental authorities, developing the framework of a civil society, combating corruption, unemployment, poverty, and retarded development. We need to concentrate on education and vocational training of the young generation, we need to reform the economy, to encourage investments, and we need to open the markets for liberal trade and individual initiatives. We strive to intensify the role of the private sector, to guarantee human rights, equal opportunity, and the equality of rights and obligations in legislation.

In my opinion, these issues are basic preconditions that we Arabs have to deal with promptly and urgently if we want to succeed in building modern states and societies that are qualified to deal with the world. We must achieve these goals in order to play a role in influencing world events and its course as active partners in the international community.

Here I must carefully consider the details of the problems of terrorism, extremism, and fanaticism that our world is experiencing nowadays. We reject terrorism and condemn it in all its forms, as we also condemn all forms of extremism, fanaticism, self-isolation, and racism. We consider these to be in opposition to our religion, civilisation, and against all moral, cultural and social principles and values in which we believe. Therefore we were among the first who vehemently condemned the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. The same applies for all other terrorist attacks experienced by other parts of the world in the recent past. The last were those in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Morocco. We cannot consider these attacks to be any less than criminal and chaotic actions that target innocent people and may not achieve any political or humanitarian goals.

Therefore we have continuously called for international comprehensive efforts to combat this phenomenon and eradicate it with its causes. Furthermore, we continuously expressed our readiness for full co-operation in the war on terrorism in all its aspects.

At the same time we call for discernment between terrorism and the legitimate right of nations for to fight for liberation. We also reject the branding of Islam with terrorism and describing this international problem as if it were merely confined to the Islamic societies. The Islamic religion is innocent of terrorism, and the real Islamic teaching is far removed from extremism and fanaticism. It calls for tolerance, justice, equality, and openness towards other religions, cultures, and civilisations. These phenomena are definitely not confined to Moslems and the Islam. Once in the past you also suffered from terrorism and its terrible results. Therefore we think that we all need to work together to find a

comprehensive and internationally acknowledged definition of the terrorism problem, as well as the required measures to combat it and eradicate its causes, thus saving our societies from its consequences.

Ladies and gentlemen,

These conditions are in my opinion complementary to each other. Without first of all settling the regional crises and disputes, as I mentioned before, the Iraq issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict, and without finding a just, permanent, final, and acceptable solution to them, it would remain difficult, or rather impossible, to realise security and stability in the region. Without security and stability the consequence would be even greater difficulty in concentrating all our efforts, resources, and power on reforms, modernisation, and the desired democratic, economical, and social developments. This on the other hand would mean an escalation of the factors leading to instability and national and regional tension. These factors causing more instability would provide a climate suitable for the spread of extremism and isolation with its rivers of violence, fanaticism, and terrorism. As you see it becomes a vicious circle.

We all need to co-operate in order to leave this vicious circle. The way to break it is to start concentrating on the priorities without delay. Therefore we really hope the situation in Iraq can be brought to normal which would guarantee making it a positive example for the whole region. Furthermore, we hope that the United States and the international community will continue their obligation to push the Road Map forward, regardless of how many setbacks are suffered and obstacles arise. We hope that all articles of the Road Map will find complete fulfilment, that the Road Map will succeed in realising the targeted settlement of the Israeli Palestinian conflict. Such a solution would play a great role in fostering a climate suitable to develop the region and to improve the plight and life of its nations. Furthermore it would help to combat terrorism and eradicate its roots and causes. It would also support openness, tolerance, and mutual respect at which we are aiming.

I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, again for your presence here and your interest. I wish you and the Federal Republic of Germany continuous progress and prosperity.