

***Formulating cooperation
in our new multilateral world***

***Speech of
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I thank H.H. THE EMIR SHEIKH HAMAD BIN KHALIFA AL THANI and Prime Minister of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim Bin Jaber Al Thani , and Chairman of this forum, H.E. Minister Mohammed Abdullah Al-Roumihi, for this historic meeting. For indeed a new age of nationalism is replacing the bipolar and ideological world of the Cold War. And we're seeing a relative recession of American power as new states rise in what is becoming once again a multi-polar world.

China, India, Russia—Japan, Brazil, Indonesia—South Korea, Saudi Arabia, South Africa: all of them are taking their places in the global balance of power, alongside the United States and the European Union.

To cope with this changing world, the *last superpower* continues to amass *unprecedented* military might. Already the US has *more muscle* than the *20 other military powers combined*, although it is currently bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But perhaps for Washington 'Soft power'—economic growth and cultural attractiveness—is likely to be more *useful* for future *contests*. Republican and Democratic party leaders of the U.S. may now be more inclined to developing soft power.

CERTAINLY NATIONALISM'S RESURGENCE will mean a more *volatile* world. There will be *irredentism*—rivalries over fuel, water and natural resources—enmities generated by varying interpretations of shared histories such as the example of the Pacific War.

Russian nationalism in particular represents a potential danger in the way it has *turned inward*, since the break-up of the Soviet Union. But as a historic Orthodox Christian power, we hope it can recognize the value of taking the lead in the Caucasus and in Central Asia in organizing regional Christian-Muslim and interfaith dialogues to help reduce politico-religious and ethnic and tensions conflicts at least in their region of the world.

Even more dangerous is the rivalry between China and the United States. The two Asia-Pacific powers sometimes seem to be *replaying* the age-old conflict between the *hegemonic* and the *rising* power. In the end, they must get together and find ways and means to cooperate and benefit from mutual trade and cooperation for the practical consideration is that they have to buy and sell to each other.

GLOBAL COOPERATION THROUGH REGIONAL GROUPINGS

HOW ARE WE TO FORMULATE COOPERATION in this emerging multilateral world?

Compromise is necessary if *competing* nationalisms are to gain from *cooperation*.

If we are to restrain *competing* nationalisms and channel their energies positively, our individual countries should join the global movement toward *regional groupings*.

In my view, regional groupings are the *finest vehicles* for global cooperation—if only because they can build up the measure of near-equality that bilateral negotiations between rich and poor countries cannot ever achieve.

Given the WTO's failure to open up global trade, regional blocs to *create economic scale* and *enforce reciprocity* will likely become the main concerns of diplomacy over the immediate future. Doha must be patient and persevere. It will take adjustments and time but in the end the Doha Round should end successfully.

In East Asia in our part of the world, the East Asian Economic Grouping we're organizing may well become the world's largest. It will encompass the 10 Southeast Asian states—China, Japan, South Korea—and, eventually, India and Australia-New Zealand as well.

The *European Union* is the *model* of the new-type great power. The EU is using *not* its military (it has no armed force to speak of) but its economic strength to *unify* Europe and to *moderate* Russia's aggressive impulses. Already it is the biggest ODA donor.

The EU's success is inspiring Africa's own movement toward union. And the Asian Parliamentary Assembly that 48 of our legislatures have formed—and which I helped

organize—is modelled on the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

COOPERATION TO DEFEAT TERRORISM AND POVERTY

TO WHAT ENDS should multilateral cooperation be put?

Poverty is the greatest *blight* on our world, and it can be dealt with only through multilateral cooperation.

Over these past 150 years, portions of the world have so improved their material situation they find it hard to imagine how badly so many of their fellows live.

Yet, even now, *one quarter* of all the world's people *still subsists* on the equivalent of *less than one* American dollar a day.

Resentment, rage and despair over this kind of inequality have set off *anarchic terrorism*.

The United Nations has organized an epic campaign against global poverty over 2000-2015. But at the halfway mark toward these Millennium Development Goals, the poorest countries are still hard-put to finance their MDG programs.

Indeed the 100-odd debt-ridden states are finding it more and more difficult to service their \$2.3 trillion in official debt-stock.

To their debt-burden, *I have proposed* that they be allowed to retain *a set percentage* of all their scheduled debt-payments—for them to invest in MDG projects.

In return, the creditor, under the “Debt for Equity Program” to finance anti-poverty projects under the U.N. Millennium Development Goals, would receive equity ownership in the project—recovering his investment in profits from the venture.

Build-operate-and-transfer infrastructure projects could generate toll fees and users’ taxes. Reforestation, under the Kyoto Protocol, could pay off in commercial tree planting, which will also be entitled to carbon credits.

This ‘debt-for-equity’ program the Philippines has proposed to the UN, to the rich countries, and to the international lending institutions. In December 2006, the General Assembly endorsed it unanimously as one of the acceptable “innovative financing” initiatives. Now, Asia’s political parties, meeting in Islamabad late last month, have asked U.N. Secretary General Ban ki-Moon to bring the proposal before the G-8 and Paris Club creditor-countries.

Against fanatic terrorism, the Philippines has proposed ‘Inter-Faith’ Dialogues to isolate the extremists and bring to bear the moral influence of the great religions on local conflicts. That proposal, too, the UN has begun carrying out in the regions of conflict.

WHAT WE’RE TRYING TO DO IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

TO CONCLUDE, LET ME SUM UP how the Asia-Pacific states are trying to use our regional networks to replace the *Pax Americana* that has kept the region stable with a *Pax Pacifica* or a *Pax Asiana* based on regional cooperation.

The American Peace is at bottom based on their vision of nations that imbibe liberal democracy, supported by the

interacting US military arrangements with its allies around the world.

It would be further based on cooperation between *layers* of regional groupings—starting from ASEAN in Southeast Asia, then to the East Asian Economic Grouping of ASEAN and the three Northeast Asian states—and culminate in APEC—the 21-member Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum that links all the Pacific Basin states.

It would be founded on cooperation among the United States, Japan, China, India, Asean, a peace hopefully of virtual equals in the Pacific and Indian oceans.

Of course, in the end, relations among the great powers will always be an *interplay* of *competition and cooperation*.

The strategic challenge is for all our countries—and for all organizations devoted to global cooperation—to ensure that the *spirit of cooperation* is *always stronger* than the *impulse of competition*.

I wish our Doha Forum continuing success.

Thank you and good day.