

State of Qatar

Positions for the League of Arab States

I: Ensuring Access to Political Processes in Conflict Situations

The State of Qatar recognizes that impeded access to political processes and institutions in times of conflict represents a significant threat to the stability and order of member states of the League of Arab States. The State of Qatar maintains the position that access to political processes during conflict situations is just and necessary so that individuals can consistently participate in the representative or reformatory process. We strongly feel that the recent revolutions and governmental upheavals in recent years in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are virtuous and legitimate transitions catalyzed by the will of the people. The State of Qatar recognizes that there are certain areas of the political process that are particularly vulnerable to influence and violation in times of conflict. We feel strongly that the United Nations has already affirmed this concept as written, “the international community can contribute to creating conditions which could foster stability and security throughout the pre-election, election and post-election period in transitional and post-conflict situations,” (A/RES/66/462). The State of Qatar pledges to act in solidarity with that principle and take necessary action to ensure access and consequent stability. We identify two primary areas of vulnerability in times of conflict that may impair access to political processes; a lack of consistency in legitimate election mechanisms and processes that obstructs qualifying individuals from voting, and chaotic and disorderly governmental transitions. We advocate for ensured access to political processes in all member states for the purpose of maintaining the stability necessary for states to protect the rights of their citizens, their national and regional identity and foster their socioeconomic development.

Under the direction of our supreme Emir, His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani, the State of Qatar fosters an active and assertive foreign policy with a commitment to diplomacy and peacemaking to unite MENA and advance common socioeconomic interests. Throughout the last several decades, the State of Qatar is proud to have established itself as a strong and neutral mediator in many disputes and negotiations involving foreign and domestic policy in international conflicts. Many prominent actors and states have acknowledged the State of Qatar’s commitment to mitigating conflict and promoting peace and security in the Arab world. We hope to further our history of successful mediation and leadership in negotiation in this session of the League of Arab States to develop solutions to mitigate any potential vulnerability in political processes in times of conflict.

One of the primary issues that the State of Qatar is concerned with is legitimizing the election process so as to ensure consistency in election mechanisms and processes. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes in Article 21 that, “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections...” The United Nations has affirmed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (RES/2200 (XXI)), which dictates that the international community must consistently hold genuine elections to ensure that the “free expression of the will of electors” has been guaranteed. We are willing to pledge 200,000,000 Qatari Riyal (roughly \$55 million dollars USD) in donations to the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) for the purpose of contributing to the Trust Fund for Electoral Assistance established by the Secretary-General in A/RES/46/137. This donation would be a demonstration of the commitment of the State of Qatar to electoral assistance in maintaining peace and security within the League of Arab States. We encourage in response to our donation that an ambassador be sent by the United Nations to report back to the government of the State of Qatar on the progress made with our funding. We urge other member states, if financially able, to also make similar donations to the UNDPA for the purpose of contributing to the Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD).

Increasing the funding to the UNEAD would allow the Division to offer more *pro bono* assistance to states that may be struggling with election organization or structure. The UNEAD would also be able to engage in more active working arrangements with states that request electoral assistance. We advise that the UNEAD should consider potentialities such as hiring expert individuals to work with local and national governments to develop a metric for election-monitoring procedures and develop rural outreach groups that would create mobilized voting stations that would allow qualifying individuals to more easily participate from rural areas. While making advisory plans of action are an important part of election assistance solvency, the State of Qatar recognizes that the UNEAD will be most effective if handling situations on a case-by-case basis using national and international experts who are specialized in the particular areas in which states require assistance in times of conflict.

To develop solutions for the issue of chaotic and disorderly governmental transitions, we are willing to aid the UNDPA by hosting any diplomatic negotiations necessary. These negotiations would be held for the purpose of resolving election issues or mediating disputes between agents or parties competing over the right to govern. The

State of Qatar encourages the UNDPA to host these negotiations in our governmental facilities in Doha, we will provide the highest quality of neutral and unbiased conflict arbitration and mediation. We will earmark 10% of our donation to the UNDPA specifically for the retainers and fees of international attorneys, barristers, etcetera who specialize in international conflict mediation. The State of Qatar identifies non-violent and productive conflict mediation as the solution to mitigating any negative effects of governmental transitions, and firmly believes that there is no better location than our vibrant capital, Doha, a site of empiric success in previous disputes. We are confident that our plan of action for efforts and donation, combined with a united commitment by the League of Arab States, will be highly advantageous in the pursuit of ensuring access to political processes in times of conflict.

II: Strengthening and Expanding Arab Economies: Encouragement of International Trade Relations

The State of Qatar is highly dedicated to the concept of strengthening and expanding Arab economies in the League of Arab States (LAS) by encouraging international trade relations. Economic development must be proliferated throughout all member states so that all individuals across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) can experience the same social protection and economic opportunities that the State of Qatar has committed to providing for Qatari citizens. Our plan of action and state direction is epitomized in the National Development Strategy (NDS) for the State of Qatar 2011-2016 with the goal of achieving the Qatar National Vision for 2030. Sustaining economic prosperity is one of the key tenets of our NDS and we feel that the entirety of MENA will benefit from adopting similar policies as the ones our economic experts have outlined in our policy document. However, in order to fully prosper economically, the less developed and developing states of MENA must first achieve state stability and security, a prerequisite to any further socioeconomic development. The State of Qatar is willing and able to act as a neutral leader in mediation for any international disputes in the region that may threaten the stability or security of a state, internally or externally.

Aside from macro-level conflict resolution, we feel that educating the populaces of less developed countries will also aid in the mitigation of conflict and increasing state stability. The next step after fostering an educated and skilled work force is to develop industries, apart from those that dominate the status quo, which will employ the newly educated. The State of Qatar advocates an economic plan of action to be discussed in this session of the League of Arab States that would include education and skill building at both Qatar-based and regionally located institutions, increased investment in human capital, diversification of industries into non-commodity based exports, and a research and development emphasis placed on STEM-related (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) skills and industries. The State of Qatar believes that if the LAS commits to this plan of action, it will attract greater foreign investment and trade, which will also spurn economic development, creating a positive development cycle that will encourage international trade relations, and consequently strengthen and expand Arab economies.

The State of Qatar invested a significant amount of economic resources into developing our Education City in Doha. In this session of the LAS, we intend to commit 275,000,000 Qatari Riyal (roughly \$75 million USD) to building new skills training based institutions as a part of Hamad bin Khalifa University, located in Education City. 50% of our monetary pledge will be devoted towards advancing specialized research and development programs that will develop economic plans for the diversification of industries towards non-commodity exports. . The State of Qatar recognizes the need for economic diversification within the region of MENA as the current state of centralized commodity overexposure hinders states' abilities to effectively produce long-term economic plans. The focus of these industries will be related to STEM-related skills, which have been identified by global scholars as some of the most valuable skills in advancing globalization and modernity in terms of development. 10% of our monetary pledge will fund the construction of new buildings to vastly expand the volume capacity for the student population at Hamad bin Khalifa University. 20% of our monetary pledge will be reserved for scholarships, specifically for students who apply from other areas of MENA, so as to place the primary emphasis on educating students who will hopefully return to their home countries and be members of a more skilled work force in the LAS. 20% of our monetary pledge will go towards funding projects for fledging industries at the discretion of the economic experts at the Qatari National Research Fund.

The State of Qatar believes that this plan for political mediation, increased education, economic diversification and new industry projects will aid the LAS in developing prosperous industries, a more skilled workforce, and more consistent socioeconomic stability. With the help of the United Nations, the State of Qatar projects that these economic advancements will encourage foreign investments and thus strengthen and expand Arab economies through the encouragement of international trade relations.