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Address

By

**His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa
King of the Kingdom of Bahrain**

At the

Sixty-Sixth Session of the United Nations
General Assembly

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In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,

It is our pleasure, at this international forum, to greet our brothers and friends, the Heads of State and the delegations represented in this Hall. We hope that our meetings at this Sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly will be fruitful, and will result in concrete outcomes commensurate with our aspirations for a global environment of stability, security and lasting peace, for the good and wellbeing of humanity at large. We are pleased to see yet another diplomat from the Gulf Cooperation Council presiding over the General Assembly, and we take this opportunity to offer our sincere wishes of success to His Excellency Ambassador Nasser bin Abdul Aziz Al-Nasr in his international mission and of further progress and advancement at all levels for his country, the brotherly State of Qatar. We express our thanks to his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss, for his valuable contributions in steering the work of the previous session.

We would also like to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his ceaseless efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, and his persistent endeavours to achieve the prerequisites for stability in our world, namely development and collective international cooperation for the benefit of the peoples of the world as a whole. We seize this opportunity to congratulate him on his re-election for a second term of office.

There is no doubt that the world is now entering a new era of important changes, in which the growth of modern means of communication has led to rapid and unprecedented transformations in the world such as those we are now experiencing in our Arab region. More than a decade ago, we in the Kingdom of Bahrain recognized the need to proceed towards greater reform and improvement, keeping in mind the supreme interest of

our people, to satisfy their demands for freedom, democracy and political participation; a home-grown participation, according to the evolution of each country and its history. Reform also aimed to provide decent living conditions, security and tranquillity in a society of peaceful coexistence, equality, equal opportunities for empowerment to achieve justice and sustainable development for all.

In all its modernization endeavours, the Kingdom of Bahrain persistently followed, throughout its long history, the approach of dialogue. Building on the consensus of the people of Bahrain around the principles of National Action Charter of 2001, we initiated the national dialogue process involving all sectors and components of the population. The aim is to take on board the requirements of modern progress, to guarantee the continuation of the reform process, to fulfil the national aspirations of moving forward towards comprehensive modernization and to enhance popular participation in decision making within an all inclusive national partnership. We hereby reaffirm our support for the outcome of the Dialogue

The achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain at the national level are therefore an extension of a long history dating back to the beginnings of the last century, in which we have worked to achieve a society based on justice, equality, transformation and openness. Our people's authenticity, our culture, our free economy, political development, and commitment to the universal principles of human rights and peaceful coexistence and respect for the views of others, constitute the real wealth of the country, which we preserve and sustain for future generations.

Mr. President,

Today, more than any time in the past, the international community is offered a propitious opportunity to do justice to the brotherly Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate aspirations by recognizing their independent Palestinian state on their own national territory, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This would put an end to an era of bitter Arab-Israeli conflict, subject to a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab

territories to the lines of 4 June 1967 in Palestine, the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and the occupied territories in southern Lebanon, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Based on our commitment to the security of the Arabian Gulf region, we emphasize the need to resolve the issue of the three occupied United Arab Emirates' islands, through direct negotiations or by referral to the International Court of Justice. With regard to developments in the brotherly Yemen, the Kingdom of Bahrain supports the Gulf initiative to maintain the security, stability and unity of Yemen and achieve the aspirations of its people. We also emphasize in this respect the importance of preserving the unity of Moroccan territory and resolving the issue of the Moroccan Sahara in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Consistent with its commitment to concerted international action, and its role and responsibilities in the region, the Kingdom of Bahrain did not hesitate to contribute to and participate in the Group of Friends of Libya to achieve the aspirations of the Libyan people and to ensure the unity and territorial integrity of the country. Bahrain is also participating in the international peacekeeping forces in Afghanistan, in support of its stability and security in all political, economic, and security spheres, as well as in the fight against international terrorism and piracy on the high seas. The Kingdom of Bahrain also shares with the friendly American people their heartfelt pain caused by the reprehensible terrorist attack of 9/11. Their resilience and determination, however, helped in making their country a safer place.

As a peace-loving nation, the Kingdom of Bahrain will remain faithful to this Organization for its historic role supporting the sovereignty of our country, and for its judiciary for ending interstate disputes all over the world in support of stability and development in the world. We believe that humanity and the international community have much to gain at the global level from the contributions of Arab-Islamic civilization, as did other human civilizations throughout history. The Arabs-Muslims, Christians, Jews and followers of other religions and beliefs- can only coexist in a "Civil State"

that is based on tolerance. We speak here of the reality of the experience of our country, Bahrain, with its characteristic openness and its civilization deeply rooted in history which made it, from times immemorial, a symbol of coexistence and interaction between these human contributions. Hence its position as a cultural and spiritual centre of its natural and human environment in the Arabian Gulf region since early times, a position upon which it built its civil society and its modern renaissance in the field of administrative organization, economic action, and educational and cultural revival.

While the Kingdom of Bahrain appreciates the support of the United Nations and its specialized agencies for its achievements, as evidenced by the numerous awards it won in various human and social fields, we would like to reaffirm our equally keen interest in the global issues exposed in the Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Organization. We are convinced that it is imperative for all Member States to cooperate on a number of issues such as addressing climate change, international health, drought, poverty alleviation, disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and combating terrorism. This is needed in order to address the important challenges and problems facing humanity and create a new world under the auspices of security, peace and progress.

Finally, we want once again to reaffirm our commitment to the principles and objectives of the United Nations, and its constructive role in consolidating peace, love and prosperity in the world.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.