

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Statement

**by H. E. Ambassador
Nassir Bin AbdulAziz Al-Nasser
Permanent Representative
of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations**

**Before
The Opening Meeting of the 14th Session**

**Of
The Commission
on Sustainable Development**

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**Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations - New York
809 U.N. Plaza. 4th Floor. New York, NY 10017. Tel: (212) 486-9335. Fax: (212) 758-4952**

In the Name of God Most Compassionate Most Merciful

**Mr. Chairman;
Your Excellencies;
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

On behalf of the State of Qatar, it is my pleasure to thank the Secretary General of the United Nations for his informative report in document E/CN.17/2006/3 which constitutes an important background paper for the work of this session. I would equally like to thank the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development for the effort exerted on both the global and regional levels, and for the preparations for the 14th session. This session is of special importance given the theme that it will address, namely the review of progress achieved in the implementation of the Johannesburg Program of Action, and of the challenges restricting the effective and speedy progress in combating poverty and spurring the economic development of the developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The energy sector can play an important role in this endeavor, particularly if efforts were geared to creating equal opportunities for cooperation and partnerships among all countries irrespective of the level of their economic or industrial development. In his report, the Secretary General stressed the importance of the energy sector, and the pivotal role it plays in all aspects of the development process. He also underscored the importance of searching for adequate and immediate solutions to provide energy services to developing countries. Over 2.5 billion people around the world continue to rely on primitive means to satisfy their daily needs of energy, which negatively impact both health and the environment, and precipitate the process of desertification.

It is widely believed that fossil fuels would continue to account for at least 80% of the world's total energy consumption until 2030. It therefore follows that sustainable development in all its aspects will continue to be significantly linked to the availability of clean energy and highly efficient technologies necessary to develop resources in producing countries on one hand, and to the level of

consumption in consuming countries on the other. Natural gas will also continue to be of great importance, particularly in the Field of power generation and industrial and household use given the advantages it has for the environment and its industrial safety when compared to other sources of energy such as coal and nuclear power. It is estimated that natural gas will account for at least 24% of the total world energy consumption.

It gives me pleasure to recall in this regard the results of the International Symposium on Natural Gas and Sustainable Development held in Doha, Qatar from 6-8 February 2006. The Symposium was co-organized by the Ministry of Energy and Industry and the United Nations Division on Sustainable Development in the context of the preparations for this session.

The Symposium identified the importance and the strategic dimension of natural gas in achieving the Millennium Development Goals particularly with regard to raising the living standards and alleviating poverty in Developing Countries as outlined in the Johannesburg Plan.

150 participants representing 37 countries, including senior officials, government policy makers and United Nations representatives, attended the Seminar. The Seminar addressed the technical, institutional and financial aspects of developing natural gas resources and marketing it globally as a reliable, affordable and environmentally sound form of energy.

The Symposium underscored the environmental qualities of natural gas, which are related to lower greenhouse gas emissions. In its recommendations, the Symposium stressed that natural gas is a cleaner source of energy and a strong vehicle for socio-economic development in both producing and consuming countries. Moreover, it recommended that natural gas be supported at the level of the World Trade Organization given the fact that it is a clean and favorable commodity for sustainable development.

The Symposium also recommended that more attention be given to technological research and development in the field of gas production, processing and transport, whether in its liquid or nature form. This promoted the State of Qatar

to step up investments in all these aspects in order to provide the world with a cleaner energy. That was Qatar's way of effectively contributing to strengthening the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely economic and social development and the protection of the environment.

We look forward to the discussion of the practical steps that the international community will undertake in the field of the sustainable development of natural gas as indicated in the report on conclusions and recommendations of the Symposium in document E/CN.17/2006/11.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.