

15 December 2006

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
at International Human Solidarity Day**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, the General Assembly proclaimed that each year 20th of December would be 'International Human Solidarity Day' in the fight against poverty.

More than 1 billion people around the world live in conditions of poverty, most of them in Africa. They struggle for their survival on less than one dollar a day. The alleviation of their plight and suffering is our collective responsibility and common cause.

As we gather here today to commemorate 'International Human Solidarity Day', we recognize that international solidarity is the fundamental value that unites us in our common effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and eradicate extreme poverty.

Last month, the General Assembly - in close cooperation with the Economic and Social Council - held an informal thematic debate on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. It was a unique opportunity to accelerate progress towards closer partnerships between donor and recipient countries, as well as civil society and the private sector.

One of the key messages that emerged from this event was that by working together, the Millennium Development Goals could still be achieved, which would be the single greatest service to humankind.

Let me conclude, by leaving you with the words of Mahatma Gandhi. And I Quote;

"There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread."

End of quote.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The burden of responsibility is on our shoulders to enable the poor to take charge of their own destiny, so that they can enjoy their right of happiness.

Thank you very much.