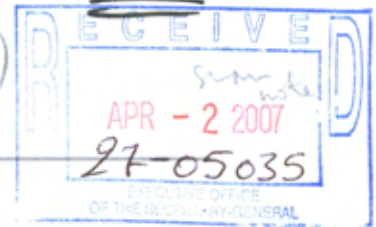


UNFIP

NOTE TO MR. VIJAY NAMBIAR (w. amb.)



Subject: Regional Centre for Partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa

You might recall I had briefly mentioned the concept of a regional centre for partnerships headquartered in Doha. We have just sent the attached proposal to the Foreign Ministry in Qatar for their reaction.

We have discussed with some prospective partners and there seems to be a lot of interest in working with the State of Qatar and the United Nations in support of the Centre. Specifically, the Synergos Institute, an organization set up by Ms. Peggy Delany, daughter of David Rockefeller has indicated its interest in supporting multi-stakeholder partnerships. The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, which has extensive experience in the region, has asked to be a full partner of the regional Centre.

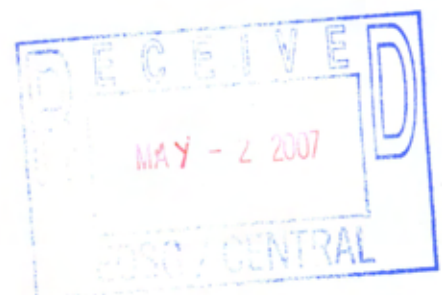
I have been invited by the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs to speak at the 7th Doha Forum for Democracy, Development and Free Trade on 23-25 April, and hope to use the opportunity to have a brainstorming meeting on the proposed Centre, with the Ministry and two or three potential partners.

I noticed the Secretary-General will be giving the keynote address at the Forum, and wanted to let you know that I am available to assist him as needed.

Amir A. Dossal
2 April 2007

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cc: Ms. Josiane Ambiehl
Ms. Camilla Schippa



Proposal

**REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PARTNERSHIPS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
HOSTED BY THE STATE OF QATAR**

**in cooperation with the
United Nations**

March 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper proposes the establishment of a **Regional Centre for Partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa Region** - a joint initiative of the **State of Qatar** and the **United Nations** to promote multi-stakeholder partnerships, and serve as a Centre of Excellence for training, within the Region.

Specifically, it is a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and the UN Office for Partnerships¹. The Centre will be based in Doha, with leadership and support from the State of Qatar and policy advice and guidance on partnership-building provided by the UN Office for Partnerships.

An **International Steering Committee** consisting of representatives from government, the private sector, foundations and civil society will be established to guide its work.

The following are the **Strategic Objectives** of the Centre:

- **Leadership role in facilitating strategic partnerships** at the national, regional and international levels in support of the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, across all sectors;
- **Centre of Excellence** for training on partnerships including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies, which will contribute to local capacity building and provide employment opportunities for youth in the region; and,
- **Knowledge Network** to link prospective partners with communities of practice in the region and internationally.

A core component of these objectives would include advocacy to raise visibility of the region's work in support of UN causes.

¹ The Office for Partnerships, working under the leadership of the UN Deputy Secretary-General, serves as a gateway for partnership opportunities with the United Nations family. It promotes collaborations and alliances in furtherance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and provides support to new initiatives of the Secretary-General. The Office manages two innovative mechanisms:

- the **United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)** established by the Secretary-General in March 1998 to serve as the interface in the partnership between the UN system and the UN Foundation - the public charity responsible for administering Ted Turner's \$1 billion contribution in support of UN causes,
- the **United Nations Democracy Fund** established by the Secretary-General in July 2005 to support democratization throughout the world focused on supporting democratic institutions, promoting human rights, and ensuring the participation of all groups in democratic processes.

II. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

(a) The Need for Partnerships

The Millennium Declaration, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the year 2000, and incorporating the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), represents an ambitious yet achievable programme of action for Member States and the international community. The first seven MDGs which were adopted in the Declaration anticipate halving poverty levels as well as other substantial improvements in health, education and environmental sustainability by 2015.

The eighth MDG calls for international partnerships in support of these global goals, encompassing aid, trade and mutual support between states. Indeed, there is a widespread recognition that no single actor or class of actors can achieve the MDGs alone. The achievement of the goals requires the active participation of civil society actors, including private sector and not-for-profit institutions. Enormous benefits and synergy can be achieved when these actors work in partnerships, allowing each party to contribute its skills and resources to achieve a common end.

In recognition of this interdependence, the General Assembly gave a clear mandate in its 2005 World Summit Outcome Document for the UN system to enhance efforts to build global partnerships for development. Paragraph 172 of the Outcome Document states *"We welcome the positive contribution of the private sector and civil society in the promotion and implementation of development and human rights programmes and stress the importance of their continued engagement with Governments, the United Nations and other international organizations in these key areas"*.

While the shape and size of partnerships can vary greatly, experience has shown that the ingredients of successful partnerships include agreement about a common objective and commitment to work together to achieve desired results. While partnerships do not always entail a financial contribution they do entail use of comparative advantages of the various stakeholders, such as leadership skills, policy, management and technical expertise, as well as logistics assets.

(b) The Leadership of Qatar

The Government of Qatar, as a regional leader in the Middle East and North Africa, acts as a catalyst for the development of policies in support of sustainable human development. This includes the promotion of both employment generation through international investment and trade, and a concerted effort to improve human development indicators in health and education.

In this context Qatar has hosted a number of policy dialogues, such as the Doha round of international trade talks. Qatar was a leading advocate of the Millennium Declaration and has been a strong supporter of the recently established UN Democracy

Fund. Also, the Sixth International Conference of New and Restored Democracies (ICNRD) was hosted by Qatar in November 2006. Qatar has sought to set an example in respect of sustainable human development in the region.

International and regional experts at the Doha Forum on Democracy and Trade, held in November 2006, reviewed the **region's** overall progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the impact of globalization on the Middle East and North Africa Region. Among the conditions indicating sub-optimal performance of the region under globalization, they identified:

- high rates of brain drain in the most educated segment of the population;
- high rates of unemployment among educated youth;
- large informal sectors with low value-added and isolation from the modern economy;
- domination of the private sector by a few family-owned groups; and
- weak capacity for innovation in high value-added industries and services.

To address these conditions, leaders in the region were advised to adopt policies that would break the cycle of closed economies, low productivity, high unemployment and brain drain, and create an environment of high productivity, high employment and competitiveness on the global market.

The debate also acknowledged the importance of human development especially in the areas of health and education, to support economic growth and employment creation. The suggestions for follow-up action included the need to increase productivity by investing in health, education and human resource training; and the importance of establishing closer links between universities and technical training institutions and an expanding private sector.

It was recognised that confronting such issues will require leadership in the creation of a network of partnerships among key stakeholders, including private sector leaders, universities and higher training institutes, local and national authorities and civil society.

(c) The Proposed Centre

This proposal foresees the establishment of a **Regional Centre for Partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa**. The Centre would facilitate the development and dynamic expansion of networks, alliances and coalitions aimed at enabling the region to take full advantage of, and contribute to, strategic opportunities offered by increasing globalization in support of the achievement of the MDGs for all the people of the region.

The Centre would be based in Doha and developed under the aegis of the United Nations Office for Partnerships, which serves as a broker for multi-stakeholder partnerships addressing global challenges. Building on its relationship with the UN Foundation and the UN Democracy Fund, the UN Office for Partnerships facilitates

innovative public-private partnerships among governments, the business community, foundations, civil society and the United Nations system.

(d) Pioneering a Regional Approach

Both the Government of Qatar and the United Nations see this initiative as a model for further regionalisation of international partnership promotion. The UN intends to promote the establishment of similar centres in other regions. This concept paper is therefore written on the basis of certain generic functions and systems, which would be adjusted to the specific requirements of each region.

III. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and RESULTS

(a) Strategic Objectives

The Centre would have the following long-term objectives:

- **Leadership role in facilitating strategic partnerships** at the national, regional and international levels in support of the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, across all sectors;
- **Centre of Excellence** for training on partnerships including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies, which will contribute to local capacity building and provide employment opportunities for youth in the region; and,
- **Knowledge network** to link prospective partners with communities of practice in the region and internationally.

A core component of these objectives would include advocacy to raise visibility of the region's work in support of UN causes.

(b) Proposed Outcomes

The following outcomes are expected in the first three years of the Centre's existence.

(i) A Global Forum on Partnerships

The Centre will serve as a Forum for dialogue between the public and private sectors, and civil society, to foster international cooperation and promote regional development. The Global Forum will provide leadership for policy frameworks to promote economic and social programmes within the region. It would aim to encourage "Investment Opportunities" in the region for the private sector and foundations, and thus create the space for high-level agenda setting on partnerships for development. Moreover, it would provide a platform for dialogue across regions and sectors.

These dialogues will engage governments, international and regional development institutions, academia, think tanks, scientific/research institutions, major corporations, and key civil society organisations. The outcomes of these deliberations will serve as input for other international forums, such as the High Level segment of the United Nations General Assembly; annual conferences of the African Union; the European Union; the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; the G-8 Summit; and the World Economic Forum.

Result # 1. An annual Global Forum on Partnerships established, bringing together international and regional leaders from governments, international organisations, academia, business, foundations, and civil society.

Result # 2. Formal relationships and partnerships established with International and Regional Organisations.

(ii) Centre of Excellence for Training

The Centre would facilitate key activities such as training courses, workshops, seminars and conferences designed to engage all stakeholders, to develop practical skills on building multi-stakeholder partnerships. This training will include CSR strategies for corporations in the region, best practices and lessons learned to convert value principles into concrete action. One of the expected outcomes will be enhanced local capacity and provision of employment opportunities for the youth in the region.

Result # 3. Regular training programmes in the region on partnership building covering technical assistance on procedures and best practices, as well as programme and project design on methodologies and techniques for working with external partners.

Result # 4. Vocational and technical training programmes for youth in the region to increase their skill set and provide them with wider employment opportunities.

(iii) Regional Partnerships Network

The Centre will establish a virtual network of practitioners to share ideas and promote innovative alliances. This will consist of a searchable database - a kind of "Google for Development". It will include studies and research material on public/private and multi-stakeholder partnerships. It will attempt to capture the various examples across sectors and include information about key organisations. The Centre will develop this network through inputs from national, regional and global institutions of relevance to the Centre's work. To ensure a broad base of ownership, support and participation in the work of the Centre, there will also be a regional consultative process that will bring together a wider group of stakeholders, including civil society. This will

take advantage of existing meetings within the region, and help identify priorities for the work of the Centre.

The Centre will serve as an incubator for new partnerships, and foster some specific partnerships, as examples to others of what is possible. The Centre itself may not be party to these partnership agreements, although it will offer its brokerage services, as well as training for those interested.

As a first step, the Centre, working with the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, will facilitate the introduction and implementation of the UN-initiated humanitarian reform process in the region with a focus on strengthening international humanitarian partnerships in scope as well as in depth. It will promote enhanced engagement of regional partners with multi-lateral mechanisms for humanitarian assistance and disaster response in order to strengthen and diversify the multi-lateral system and ensure that partners in the region fully benefit from these mechanisms and help set the international aid agenda.

Result # 5. An initial mapping exercise leading to the development of a comprehensive database, including access to UN knowledge networks where appropriate, identifying potential partners in the region and encompassing all sectors: public, private, not-for profit and civil society.

Result # 6. A regular dialogue established with stakeholders (technical and operational level) to share best practices and lessons learned.

Result # 7. At least three multi-stakeholder partnerships established each year, involving the UN system, and state and/or non-state parties.

Result # 8. An annual report prepared by the Centre, assessing existing partnership experiences and highlighting successes and constraints, which could be presented to the Global Partnership Forum mentioned in (i) above.

(c) 2007 Time Frame

The launch of the new Centre in 2007 will have the following timeframe:

- **June:** Appointment of the Director of the Centre, together with other core staff to carry out the approved work programme.
- **July:** Undertake a preliminary mapping exercise of potential partnership leaders in the region, i.e. leaders who have a proven record of commitment to the multi-lateral framework, partnership building and a firm interest in the region. This would represent a key foundation stone for the work of the Centre.

- **September:** Undertake a consultative exercise involving high level individuals and potential membership institutions to meet for one day to review the findings of the mapping exercise. It will identify the focus of the Centre's programme, elements of its mission and priority activities and organizational arrangements for an initial three-year period, 2007-2009.
- **October:** Meeting of the Steering Committee-designate on the margins of the Doha Forum 2007, to review the outcomes of the consultations and approve a draft mission statement, programme of work for an initial three-year period, and an indicative budget.
- **October:** Set up the website and other communications arrangements, conceptualize the database, and establish an office in Doha, with liaison in New York.
- **September – December:** Series of soft launches with membership sectors (business, NGOs, academic institutions).

IV. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

(a) A Joint Qatar-UN Initiative

The new Centre will be an initiative of the State of Qatar, which will provide office accommodation in Doha, administrative support and seed money to set the ball rolling. The United Nations may second a staff member on a reimbursable basis to act as the first Director of the Centre. It will also assist with technical support and capacity building, utilising its global network of collaborators.

(b) Core Partners

It would be important to establish the Centre in conjunction with some key institutions and organisations with recognised experience and expertise in partnerships. These will include UN departments, funds, programmes and agencies, and the World Bank. The Centre will work closely with the network of UN training and research institutes, including the UN University Centre in the region and the World Bank Institute.

The Centre will also aim to benefit from the experience of the United Nations partnership with the United Nations Foundation (UNF) – a public charity established by Mr. Ted Turner, who committed \$ 1 billion dollars in 1997 to support UN causes. To-date, in addition to Mr. Turner's personal funds, the UNF has mobilised nearly \$400 million from other partners, including private sector, civil society and foundations, for programmes and projects in the environment, children's health, women and population, and peace, security and human right sectors.

The Centre will also seek alliances with such major organisations like the International Business Leaders Forum, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Synergos Institute, to collaborate on the policy and programmatic levels.

(c) The Centre's Office

The Centre will be headed by a Director with substantial international experience, supported by a small team of two or three professional staff. The Executive Director of the UN Office for Partnerships will provide management oversight for the Centre. The core staffing of the Centre will be supplemented by consultants and secondments from other organisations.

The administrative systems used by the Centre will be those of the Qatar Government, which will also provide financial management and audit services, as necessary.

(d) An International Steering Committee (ISC)

An International Steering Committee will be established to provide overall policy guidance and oversight, as well as oversee an independent evaluation at the end of the first phase of operations.

The ISC will consist of internationally-recognized individuals, drawing from government, civil society, private sector and the United Nations (including the UN Resident Coordinator for Qatar). It will be co-chaired by a senior official appointed by the State of Qatar and one by the United Nations.

The Steering Committee will meet at least twice a year, once in the region and once in an international venue. The Director of the Centre will be an ex-officio Secretary to the Steering Committee.