

Emir urges continued debate

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At the forefront of the process is democracy, not only as a mechanism for decision-making but as a way of life that is directly involved with the essence of its peoples' aspirations for development, progress and building a better future which was supposed to be attained several decades ago.

"However, more efforts are needed today to attain it, and the process has the right to get enough international support to help the reform message achieve its goals."

The Emir reminded the gathering that the region had never complained of the too many who extended help to attain democracy, but rather complained of their shortage.

The Emir pointed out that democracy, development and free trade complemented each other and none could be implemented separate from each other.

In developing countries in particular, democracy could not be attained without effective development in all economic and social fields.

Political freedom is meaningless in a community in which poverty, ignorance, and unemployment prevails. Likewise, sustainable development could not be attained unless the citizen is allowed to participate in decision making and to protect his economic interests.

"The same thing applies to free trade since its desired positive results in favour of development are linked to the existence of a world order that guarantees equal opportunities for all countries and peoples in a way that helps narrow the current economic gap between them."

To achieve the desired benefits from democracy, development, free trade and the consolidation of the New World order, there is an urgency to carry out a comprehensive political, economic and social reform in developing countries to help them accelerate development that will be beneficial to all categories.

"It is also imperative that

advanced countries understand the problems of the developing countries and translate that practically into agreements to be concluded in the frame of the World Trade Organisation to assist those countries develop their own capacities in order to cope with the competition required by the New World order," he stated.

The Emir also recalled that though the region was unable to keep pace with turning to the market system and democracy, it had rich experience under which trade exchange was combined with cultural openness, and religious tolerance with economic prosperity in an atmosphere of peace and stability.

● The Forum, organised by the Planning Council in collaboration with the Qatar Businessmen's Association and the Gulf Studies Centre, is being attended by more than 600 participants from 72 countries.

● HH the Emir Sheikh Hamad and his wife HH Sheikha Mozah Nasser al-Misnad attended a dinner banquet at the Sheraton Doha Hotel yesterday on the occasion of the conference.

The function was attended by a number of sheikhs, the ministers, the Advisory Council Deputy Speaker, the heads of the diplomatic corps accredited to Qatar, the delegates attending the seminar and a number of businessmen.

● HH Sheikha Mozah received separately at the Doha Sheraton Hotel Japan's Deputy Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Akiko Pama Naka, Chairperson of Algeria's Women Movement for Solidarity with Rural Families Saeeda bint Habiles, former British minister of state Baroness Simons who is also member of the House of Lords and Head of the Friends of Qatar's Group at British parliament and Ibn Khaldon Centre Director Dr Saadeddion Ibrahim.

The meetings were attended by Dr Abdullah bin Hussein al-Kubaisi, the Director of the Office of HH Sheikha Mozah.



HE the Foreign Minister and First Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani with former Lebanese president Amin Gemayel.



HE the Minister of Energy and Industry and Second Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah with Lebanese leader Michel Aoun.