

Distinguished participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Qatar for hosting this event, as well as to the organizers for their efforts.

Social development is a multidimensional issue in which poverty, discrimination, and inequality must be minimized; human dignity, justice, and collective welfare must be preserved; groups with unequal opportunities—such as migrants—must be given attention; and the institution of the family must be respected.

We must fairly assess the extent to which we have achieved the goals of social development and identify the factors that have hindered their realization. Despite notable progress, in many areas we have not reached the desired objectives.

Natural disasters, the recent global pandemic, climate change, geopolitical conflicts, as well as harsh, narrow-minded, unilateral, and discriminatory policies have all threatened or diminished the quality of life of millions of people.

Food security remains a serious challenge. One-third of the world's population—especially women and children in developing countries—struggles with hunger and malnutrition. Overcoming this situation requires a global commitment and coordinated investment in sustainable and resilient agricultural systems.

In this context, I must refer to the human catastrophe in Gaza and the occupied territories, where the occupying regime has used water and food as weapons against the population, claiming the lives of thousands of innocent women and children. This act is a clear example of genocide and a crime against humanity. It is expected that this summit, with a unified voice, will condemn such inhumane actions and propose mechanisms to prevent their recurrence.

Another major obstacle to social development is the imposition of unjust sanctions, which disrupt the social progress of nations. Sanctions violate basic human rights, undermine livelihoods, and threaten patients' access to medicine and treatment—especially for those with severe illnesses—resulting in the death of innocent people.

It is appropriate that this summit condemns such inhumane sanctions and establishes mechanisms to prevent actions that endanger public welfare.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the field of social development are based on three pillars: advancement of human development, structural social protection, and inclusive employment.

Despite extensive sanctions, Iran's Human Development Index (HDI) has increased from 0.626 in 1990 to 0.799 in 2023. Iran has also implemented programs to strengthen social and livelihood resilience in order to protect its people from economic and climatic shocks.

Madam Chair,

Addressing global challenges requires collective and principled action. We welcome South–South cooperation for development goals. Community-based governance, anti-corruption measures, and results-oriented oversight are essential. This summit must propose practical mechanisms to enhance global social protection in line with ongoing economic and environmental crises. I recommend that social resilience and the formulation of policies to strengthen it be given special attention.

Social development is incompatible with sanction-based policies. Sanctions undermine human dignity and the social stability of communities, contradicting the very goals of this summit. This meeting can send a strong message of rejecting sanctions and establish a practical discourse to address their impact on human lives.

In conclusion, I hope that a global discourse will emerge—one in which the suffering of a single individual is felt as the suffering of all humanity. As Saadi Shirazi, the great Persian poet, expressed eight centuries ago:

Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.
If you have no sympathy for human pain,
The name of human you cannot retain.