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THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Guiding Qatar's Transformation with Efficiency, Fairness and Transparency



Dr. Saleh Mohammad Al Nabit, Secretary General of the GSDP

The State of Qatar ranks third globally in both natural gas exports and proven natural gas reserves, according to the CIA World Factbook. Qatar has successfully built a state-of-the-art hydrocarbon industry from scratch and has surprised pundits by winning the much-coveted right to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

So when Qatar sets an ambitious agenda to comprehensively transform itself into a modern nation with a long-term sustainable development plan—called the Qatar National Vision 2030—there is no doubt that the country will achieve this.

What's most striking about how this Arabian Gulf nation is pursuing these goals is the transparent, clear-eyed and rigorous character of both the vision and the lead institution tasked with realizing it.

According to Dr. Saleh Mohammad Al Nabit, Secretary General of the General Secretariat for Development Planning (GSDP), Qatar recognizes that to achieve its ambitious goals, it must, among other things, "continue to modernize its government processes. Efficiency, transparency, value for money, service improvement,

technology use, policy formulation, and regulatory, financial and budgetary reform are all identified as priorities."

What this means for the international community, he adds, is that "in an environment of clear goals, workable government mechanisms, fair rules and regulations, and efficient government employees, international stakeholders can feel that their investments are secure."

Qatar National Vision 2030

Qatar's goals and approach are both defined by the Qatar National Vision (QNV), which was launched in 2008. Dr. Al Nabit says the QNV was born of the government's realization "that Qatar's vast hydrocarbon resources must be utilized to sustain development and effect a comprehensive transformation into a millennium era without distorting its heritage of values and social fabric."

The QNV sets out the main economic, social, human and environmental development goals, and reflects "the aspirations of the country's leadership and the ambitions of its people," he explains.

The GSDP, in turn, was formed to guide the implementation of the national vision, says Dr. Al Nabit, describing his organization as "akin to a development agency for the state." The secretariat led the development of the country's first National Development Strategy (2011–16) and, in an ongoing role, identifies the choices that the state faces, brings knowledge to the decision-making

process and provides advice and expertise to the various government agencies and entities responsible for helping attain Qatar's goals.

The secretariat is addressing tough issues such as determining the size and quality of the foreign labor force, with an eye to "preserving national identity and society's security, while also meeting the demands of development" and the separate matter of putting into place "efficient and modern government institutions that will be able to carry out the country's transformation" by ensuring "able and committed human resources that are well trained and fairly compensated."

Qatar's National Development Strategy was created with extensive input from government institutions, the private sector, civil society, and local and international experts, Dr. Al Nabit says, and was built using "detailed situational analysis, diagnostics and benchmarking of regional and international best practices."

Ultimately, Qatar is committed to "building a business-friendly environment, but one that recognizes that environmental, societal and cultural aspects must be directly factored into the choices that Qatar makes," he adds.

This in itself is no easy task, but the country adds an international dimension to the challenge: "Qatar is increasingly playing a role in the global partnership for development, emphasizing sustainability, human rights, peace and security," Dr. Al Nabit concludes.

