

**Speech of HE Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit,
President of the Planning and Statistics Authority**

**At the Opening of the Regional Workshop on the Changing Role of Official
Statistics in the State of Qatar: Why Data Culture Matters**

21-22 September 2022

Pullman Doha West Bay, Al Thuraya Hall

Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives of the United Nations organizations, regional organizations, and Arab and foreign statistical bodies,

Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives of ministries, government agencies, the private sector, universities, research centers and civil society organizations,

Our Valued Guests and Partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you,

First of all, I would like to welcome you to the regional workshop "the changing role of official statistics in the State of Qatar: Why Data Culture Matters", organized by the Planning and Statistics Authority in cooperation with many national and international partners led by Qatar Computing Research Institute under HBK University, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and Qatar Charity. This workshop comes in line with the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 53rd session, and in response to the accelerating developments surrounding the data revolution we currently witness, and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the statistical process.

This workshop aims to highlight and update the national data system it to meet the daily needs of emerging data and information. It also aims to emphasize the essential role of the Planning and Statistics Authority in governance management and statistical process supervision, instilling the culture of the use of data produced by all institutions in various sectors. This, in turn, would contribute to making sound decisions related to key development issues, in support of the preparation of the Third National Development Strategy, currently under way. The workshop comes further to emphasize the importance of national partnership in the production, dissemination and use of statistics and data in evidence-based policies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know, we are currently witnessing an unprecedented data flow, generated using AI-based technologies such as mobile phones, handheld devices, smart apps, and social media. These sources have simultaneously become an integral part of the modern information environment, which has in turn made us, and the statistical community at all national, regional, and international levels, face great challenges, such as the lack of governance systems capable of dealing with, managing, purifying, storing, and providing a large amount of data to users to help them make sound decisions based on reliable evidence.

Dear Guests,

The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of data in planning global emergency crises management to allocate resources efficiently. This has prompted the NSOs to harness their capabilities on the implementation of innovative technological practices in response to the requirements of the new phase imposed by the pandemic, mainly the establishment of partnerships that allow the provision of open-source data on development issues and its integration with other relevant sources in real time. Hence, we hereby stress the role played by the Planning and Statistics Authority in this aspect, with a view to accelerating the transformation of the official statistical system to be one of the national development drivers and an effective tool in measuring progress towards achieving such development, considering the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Based on our vision to build a national statistical system that provides high-quality data, I am pleased to briefly refer to the “Statistical Communication Strategy” that was recently launched by the PSA, as it was prepared to establish a joint working mechanism between the PSA and its partners in the statistical field inside the country and abroad. This would support our vision of creating an efficient and effective statistical and information system that meets the needs of the beneficiaries professionally and enjoys great credibility and confidence. It is hoped that this strategy will contribute to monitoring development statistical variables for the purposes of following up the implementation of the Third National Development Strategy and preparing high-quality reports in this regard.

Brothers and Sisters,

Today, our workshop will address a number of vital topics related to the importance of data and its use in the development sectors, as well as measuring progress towards achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the future of data collection, components and management in a knowledge-based society and digital economy, especially the use of artificial intelligence in sustainable development, and reviewing some national, regional and international experiences related to the modernization and governance of statistical systems. Through these topics, we look forward to fruitful discussions that will result in effective recommendations, highlighting the changing role of official statistics, which we are constantly updating and developing in cooperation with our partners in the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Guests,

In conclusion, I would like to thank our overseas guests for accepting the invitation to attend the workshop and look forward to benefiting from their success stories and unique experience in modernizing their statistical systems. I would like also to extend thanks to all representatives of ministries, government agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations for their participation and support for us, as well as the organizing staff from the Planning and Statistics Authority for their efforts in organizing and preparing for the workshop. I hope that the outputs of this workshop will contribute to building a comprehensive central database that provides high-quality data for researchers, scholars and those interested in economic, social, and environmental development, and its geographical and spatial components.

May Allah bless all your endeavor, and may His peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.