



**Statement by H. E. Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz
Al-Nasser on the occasion of the adoption of the Third
Committee of the General Assembly of the United
Nations the draft resolution submitted by the State of
Qatar entitled
"World Autism Awareness Day on the Second of April"**

Date: November 27, 2007

Time: 3:00 PM

Venue of the Press Conference: Official Press Conference
Room at United Nations - Room 226A, Second Floor.

I would like to welcome you all to this press conference and to inform you that the Third Committee has adopted on Thursday the 1st of November 2007, a draft resolution submitted by the State of Qatar entitled World Autism Awareness Day. The resolution was cosponsored by 50 member States in which it was decided to designate the Second of April as the World Autism Awareness Day and it would be observed every year starting 2008.

The Qatari initiative came in line with the guidance by the political leadership of the State of Qatar, represented by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar. The initiative has been promoted and supported by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misnad, Consort of His Highness the Emir of Qatar.

Her Highness have made tremendous efforts to change the way the Qatari society views towards people with disability, and in breaking the barrier of shame of which this group and their families have been suffering,

through many steps including the creation of the institutional framework required to provide care for this group by establishing many institutions including the Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs that was launched in January 1998.

Qatar shared the concerns of a number of countries by the high rate of autism in children in all regions of the world; a disease that affects the functioning of the brain , and characterized by impairment in social interaction and communications. The Qatari resolution invites all member states to observe the 2nd of April in order to raise public awareness of autism and the importance of early diagnosis, research and interventions.

I would like now to give the floor to Bob and Susan Wright from Autism Speaks, and before that, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to them for taking their personal battle with autism and showing the importance of raising awareness about the autism epidemic.

I would like now to give the floor to Ms. Jacqueline Brandt, who witnessed the passing of the resolution at the plenary of the third committee, to talk about her experiences as parent of a child with autism.

We have reached the end of our press conference. I would like to express my thanks to all of you and a special thanks to Bob Wright and Suzanne Wright, for their participation with us today;

We hope the Qatari initiative brings about the greatest impact on the lives of many children and their families living with autism,
