

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT**

**BEFORE THE**

**FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK  
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**Mr. President,**

I am pleased to start my statement by extending warm congratulations to you, Sir, and to your friendly country, the Czech Republic, on your election to the presidency of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We wish you success at the helm of this session which is convened against a backdrop of complex and daunting global challenges. Let me assure you of my delegation's full commitment to cooperate with you in order to facilitate fulfillment of your mandate.

A word of thanks and tribute goes to your predecessor Dr. Han Sung-Soo for his efficient stewardship of the previous session. In the same vein, I wish to reiterate our appreciation for the outstanding performance of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and for his tireless efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the world organization in serving global peace, security and development.

**Mr. President,**

Kuwait welcomes the admission of the Swiss Confederation to the membership of our Organization. We are confident that Switzerland's membership will boost the benefits of its already active role in supporting the United Nations activities and

programmes and further consolidate the Charter principles and purposes, especially as this country is the host to many United Nations organs and specialized agencies.

Mr. President,

The 11<sup>th</sup> September events of last year in the United States together with their consequences and implications have changed the global landscape and created a multitude of new challenges to the whole world as we are now collectively entrenched in our fight against terrorism, violence and extremism. Experience has shown that combating this pernicious phenomenon is a universal responsibility and that no single country, irrespective of its resources or determination, can control it. Moral and practical reasons make it inadmissible to put the label of this curse on any particular nation, religion or culture. This tendency will serve none of our common goals. Quite the contrary, it will deepen the political and cultural divides and exacerbate the crisis and turn it into a conflict among civilizations that harms all of us while no one stands to gain. Therefore, the United Nations remains the most appropriate and effective mechanism for the study and analysis of this phenomenon in order to identify its causes and parameters and to coordinate efforts with a view to develop the guidelines for effective measures to root out this plague. Also, the United Nations is the appropriate body that can define our responsibilities and obligations in this regard. The signing, ratification and scrupulous enforcement by all member states of the twelve United Nations instruments to combat terrorism are perhaps the most viable means for establishing a solid common ground to combat and defeat terrorism.

In this context, I wish to take this opportunity to express once again our condolences and sympathies to the friendly people and Government of the United States and to the families of all victims of this heinous act of terrorism. We do share them their anguish and hope that their fortitude and resolve will help them overcome their pain and losses. In the meantime, Kuwait reaffirms its long-standing principled position of condemning all acts of terrorism in all their forms and manifestations. We also categorically renounce all acts of violence and extremism which contravene not only international norms and treaties but the tolerant teachings of Islam and its compassionate value system as well other religions, humanitarian concepts and civilized values as well. Within the framework of Kuwait's cooperation with the ongoing international drive to fight terrorism, Kuwait welcomed Security Council resolution 1373 and, pursuant to its provisions, put in place a series of new and important steps and measures. These include:

1. The enactment of a law to combat money laundering
2. Adoption of practical measures to regulate fund-raising activities in order to ensure that these acts will not be exploited or illegally used for any objective other than their legitimate and declared purpose.

Furthermore, Kuwait, for its part, has answered all the queries sought by the United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee. We have already provided to the Committee all the data and notations that clarify our national laws and legislation enacted by the Government to combat and prosecute terrorist acts.

In the same vein, and in order to consolidate world efforts in combating terrorism, I wish to reiterate Kuwait's support for the notion of convening an international conference under the aegis of the United Nations with a view to reach an agreement on a clear and specific definition of terrorism. The primary purpose of this thinking is to distinguish between terrorism as a phenomenon that endangers international peace and security and the right of peoples to legitimate struggle in resisting foreign occupation in order to attain their rights to self-determination as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and other international treaties.

Having said that, Kuwait condemns the insidious campaign orchestrated against our sister state, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, by certain American and Western media sectors. For our part, however, we pay tribute to the Kingdom for its valuable role and significant contributions to the fight against terrorism and to achieve peace and security in the region.

Mr. President,

The success of our global efforts to eradicate terrorism depends to a large measure on the ability of the international community to effectively address major serious issues and challenges that have become a source of despair, misery, frustration, isolation and a perception of injustice for a number of peoples in all parts of the world. An elusive challenge that continues to stand out is the constant deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. The escalating confrontation has reached a level that threatens peace and security in the entire region of the Middle East. The brutal practices of the Israeli occupation forces including the unwarranted excessive use of force against the Palestinian people, the deliberate destruction of the Palestinian Authority institutions and infrastructures, in open and clear breach of the United Nations resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 resulted in aggravating the economic and social crisis endured by the Palestinians for over five decades now. Wide-scale round-ups, demolition of houses, curfews, aerial bombardment of civilian neighbourhoods, military tanks incursions into villages, towns and cities, helicopter gunship assaults on civilians have all become the order of the day for the Palestinian individual citizen in the street. Indeed those acts have become routine stories in radio and television news. And we succumbed to that in silence. It seems now that the international community has been numbed into accepting this mode of life for the unarmed Palestinian people. But all Israeli practices seem to be emanating from an entrenched precept now that Israel is immune against any accountability, exempted from any jurisdiction and shielded from any criticism or condemnation by the United Nations or by the major powers in the world.

Against this background, Kuwait reaffirms its commitment to the pan-Arab position adopted at the recent Beirut Arab Summit which endorsed the initiative put forward by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Abdel-Aziz, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia and Chief of the Saudi National Guard. In the meantime, Kuwait remains committed to its support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and

to the establishment of their independent state on their national territory, with Jerusalem their capital. Kuwait will continue to demand full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan, as well as from the rest of the Lebanese territory. World history and experience have amply shown that force, no matter how brutal it might turn, will not by itself bring about security and peace. The only viable option is to give back the legitimate rights to their owners and to implement pacts. Perhaps the best assurance of a secure future requires long-term good will investments in the present.

Mr. President,

Kuwait welcomed with satisfaction the decision adopted by the last Arab Summit held in Lebanon last March on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait. In that decision, the Arab leaders welcomed Iraq's assertions to respect the independence, sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the State of Kuwait, as well as pledges by Iraq to avert any action that might lead to a recurrence of the 1990 events. The Arab leaders also demanded Iraq to cooperate in order to find an expeditious and final solution to the question of Kuwaiti prisoners and hostages and the return of stolen Kuwaiti property as set forth in relevant Security Council resolutions. But, to our deep regret, this decision has not been implemented. The Government of Iraq has not as yet carried out its pledges, especially in regard to the Kuwaiti and third-country prisoners.

This long-running humanitarian question bears no further delay in view of its traumatic implications on the families of the victims who do not know the fate of their loved ones. The Iraqi government continues to refuse cooperation with the United Nations mechanisms established to deal with this matter. Assessing the approach followed by the Iraqi government, The Secretary-General concluded in the last paragraph of his last periodic report to the Security Council of 15<sup>th</sup> August 2002 that: Quote

*"Despite the encouraging agreements reached at the Arab Summit in Beirut, the Iraqis still have to associate words with tangible deeds as to the fate of missing persons. There is still an available opportunity to tackle, with good intention, humanitarian issues such as the one of missing persons. Iraq should seize this opportunity to recover its credibility with regard to the outstanding humanitarian issues." Unquote*

Within the same context, Kuwait welcomes the efforts and steps undertaken by the United Nations in preparation for the return of Kuwait's state archives from Iraq pursuant to Security Council resolutions. Despite the fact that Iraq denied over the past eleven years that it had seized the archives, we consider their acknowledgment of holding the archives and their intention to return them an important step towards carrying out Security Council resolutions, particularly 686, 687 and 1284. Irrespective of Iraq's motives behind returning the archives and other Kuwaiti state documents, it is our hope that this step would be followed by other positive movements that would lead to the release of our prisoners. Only then can this dossier be closed. I wish to stress here that this humanitarian issue of our prisoners has dominated the national agenda of the Government and people of Kuwait since liberation.

Regarding other relevant issues, Kuwait welcomed the dialogue between the United Nations and Iraq and we hope that this exercise will prove fruitful in leading to the implementation of the rest of key obligations, including the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and other outstanding matters.

Kuwait thinks that full and scrupulous implementation by Iraq of all relevant Security Council resolutions and allowing United Nations weapons inspectors back in Iraq would save our region the horrors of a war which we do not want. Such a war would lead only to the aggravation of the suffering of the brotherly people of Iraq and to the escalation of tension and instability in the region.

Mr. President,

Out of its keen interest in maintaining and bolstering security and stability in our region the State of Kuwait reemphasizes its support for all efforts aimed at resolving the dispute between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran over the islands by peaceful means. In this context, we welcome the mutual visits by ranking officials of both countries. We hope that such visits and direct contacts will help both parties in creating a favourable climate for confidence building between the two countries.

Mr. President,

The world economic landscape has been quite turbulent over the past year. Reports issued by numerous specialized international institutions showed that many countries, including some developed ones, have started to suffer from a global economic slow down. This in turn has led to mounting economic and social burdens on many states due to the growing imbalances and disparities between the economies of the North and the South. While the countries of the North continue to enjoy economic prosperity and better standards of living for their peoples, countries of the South continue to suffer from poverty, famine, unemployment, environmental degradation, severe shortages of drinking water, wide-spread of pandemics like HIV/AIDS and malaria, in addition to a whole range of problems that impede their sustainable development efforts. It is our hope that the decisions and plan of action just adopted at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development and at the World Summit on Finance and Development held last February in Mexico will help bolster efforts and strengthen bonds of cooperation between the North and the South with a view to lay down the underpinnings of a new partnership that contributes to stabilizing and growth of economic relations and establish the basis for balanced world trade system which sets out the responsibilities and obligations of all sides.

Perhaps one of the most pressing demands at present to shore up the economic structures of the developing countries is the fulfillment by the developed nations of their

obligations to provide meaningful financial and technical aid to the developing world. That includes bilateral arrangements or understandings with international financial institutions and organizations to alleviate the debt burdens on the developing countries and canceling the debts of the poorest nations. Also, any tariffs or obstacles that impede access of the products of these countries to developed markets should be removed. Furthermore, developing countries should find it easier to access information and technologies that help them solve their problems and integrate into the world economy. These steps will prevent the marginalization of the developing and least developed countries and help put them back on the track of development.

In this regard, Kuwait draws satisfaction from the fact that it tops the list of Arab states on the UNDP Arab human development scale for the current year. The Arab Human Development Report, incidentally, is an analytical survey published by the UNDP in cooperation with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. The report drew on a whole range of indices including health, education, acquisition of technical knowledge and the per capita income. The Government of Kuwait will be guided by the report indicators and, in cooperation with our National Assembly which is the legislative authority in our country, will maintain its efforts to improve the economic and social conditions in such a fashion that would benefit the Kuwaiti citizens and their well-being.

I wish at the same time to set on record our sense of pride in carrying out all our international obligations. In particular, Kuwait is a robust contributor to the development programme of many developing nations. Furthermore, we are a vibrant player in ensuring a stable and balance global oil market with a view to ensure equitable and universal economic development. Also, in line with its Arab and Islamic heritage and given the imperatives of kinsmanship, Kuwait never hesitated to reach out to meet its full official and non-official obligations towards the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories and to the people of Afghanistan. It is now our hope that the Afghan people, following the recent developments that took place in their country will be able to live in security and stability after deep suffering for too long because of war and internal conflicts. Let us hope that the country will now channel all its resources to national reconstruction in order to make up for those very long years of conflict and hostilities.

Mr. President,

In as much as peoples of the world differ in their religions, cultures and ethnicity they are similar in their aspirations, ambitions and hopes. We all seek to live in freedom, dignity and safety. We all yearn for a world in which peace, security and justice will prevail. Translating that vision and hope into a reality requires accelerating the pace of concerted global action to meet the noble purposes and principles defined in the Charter of the United Nations. In addition, it needs the transformation of the United Nations Millennium Summit Declaration into a concrete reality that satisfies the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world. From our cultural perspective, ultimately we are all accountable to Allah, His name be praised and glorified, the Creator of the universe. We are also accountable to our peoples in terms of fulfilling their needs and hopes for living in security and peace.

**Thank you, Mr. President.**