

*Diwan of
His Highness the Prime Minister
State of Kuwait*



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Statement of
His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad
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Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait

Before the High-Level Plenary Meeting
of the General Assembly
“Summit on the Millennium Development Goals”

UN Headquarters
Tuesday, September 21, 2010

Excellencies, Presidents,

At the outset, it is my honor to convey to you the greetings of His Highness, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, as well as his best wishes for the success of this important meeting to achieve the desired results that the peoples of the world look forward to. It is also my pleasure to congratulate you in the name of the Government and people of Kuwait on presiding over this High-Level meeting to review the Millennium Development Goals. We are certain that your wise leadership and good conduct shall contribute to achieving what we all aspire for.

I also would like to express our thanks and gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who presented a comprehensive report on the achievements that were realized, what the desired goals are, as well as the reason for the delay in reaching these goals, in the important document entitled: "Keeping the Promise: A Forward-Looking Review to Promote an Agreed Action Agenda to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015".

Excellencies, Presidents,

In the historic Millennium Summit held at the beginning of this century, the Heads of State and Government put forth a long term program and a road map to achieve noble development goals for the peoples of the world who are most in need for such development. That program was a cresset that lit the way to work towards achieving those goals. Five years ago, the world leaders met once again at the first review conference. Back then, everyone felt optimism, the indicators were encouraging, and the statistics showing the range of response by states, particularly the least developed states as well as the most affected states in the southern part of the African Sahara, and in Asia, have spurred enthusiasm and determination to exert more efforts and to commit to move ahead on the roads of reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

However, our current meeting, considered to be an important opportunity to revisit the Millennium Development Goals is dominated by indicators that are not encouraging, specially for Goal # 1, relating to the reduction of the rates of global poverty and hunger by one half. This poses a real challenge for the international community in combating these two scourges, where the number of the poor people

rose from 800 million people in 1990 to more than 1 billion in 2009, instead of dropping.

Therefore, it is imperative to adhere to the previous commitments, particularly the fulfillment by the developed countries to the commitment made in the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, to allocate 0.7% of their Gross National Product towards official development assistance.

Excellencies, Presidents,

Since our last conference in 2005, the world have witnessed enormous crises and challenges, these were represented by the increase in the prices of food products and the oscillation in energy prices. These were followed by a suffocating financial and economic crisis that has threatened the global economic system, as well as the political and social stability of some states. All states without exception, have suffered from this crisis. Its effect on the developing countries and the least developed countries was more severe, despite the fact that these states had nothing to do with the occurrence of this crisis or any of the reasons that led to it.

While we welcome the steps taken, and the policies adopted by a number of international and regional groupings to confront this crisis, ease its impact and prevent its recurrence, there remains more that we can do for the recovery of the global economy and for achieving a fair and balanced international trade system. One of the other serious challenges our world faces and requires a joint and unified effort to confront, is the climate change phenomenon and its impact on all aspects of life, from economic and trade activities to the adverse effects it has on the environment, the ecosystem and biological diversity. During the past few years, the world started witnessing an increase in the number of natural disasters that have become more severe and destructive, due to climate changes, causing enormous losses in life and property, such as the destructive earthquake that hit Haiti last January, and the floods that have swept Pakistan last month. We hope that we will be able, in the upcoming conference scheduled for the coming month of December in Cancun, Mexico; to reach a legally binding document, which will determine the steps, policies, as well as the responsibilities that the developed and the developing countries will bear to limit the effect of climate change as well as assisting the developing countries to adapt to its consequences.

Despite the fact that these difficulties have hindered the efforts and limited the abilities of numerous states to achieve the MDG's, we however, agree with what was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, that the "Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals remain feasible with adequate commitment, policies, resources and effort". Therefore, we view this meeting as an important opportunity to renew the commitment and the determination to shoulder our responsibilities, implement our commitments and mobilize our energies for a better world, where the gap of disagreements, divisions and conflicts that are fed by the absence of justice and equality, can be narrowed, while the horizons of cooperation and partnership are expanded, and where peace and security prevail.

In this regard, we wish to emphasize that the United Nations remain the most credible, legal and neutral multilateral mechanism there is, where we can discuss the best ways and means to reach joint collective solutions to the global challenges and hazards.

Excellencies, Presidents,

The State of Kuwait believes that the development goals the world seeks to achieve by 2015 are attainable. There are positive signs that support this conviction, such as the improvement in the rates of registration in schools, as well as improvements in child and maternal health, the increase in access to clean water, and the progress in combating dangerous diseases, like HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis.

All these advances and positive results achieved require constant and prompt efforts in order to maintain and consolidate them, particularly in the face of the numerous challenges the world faces. A high percentage of the world's population in certain regions still suffer from poverty, hunger, dangerous diseases, increased rates of unemployment, illiteracy and displacement, in addition to the negative effects of armed conflicts and foreign occupation, not to mention the perils of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, the spread of transnational organized crime, illegal drug trade, the spread of the terrorism phenomenon, and the violations of human rights. All these difficulties pose in their totality, a real threat to international peace and security, as well as an obstacle to achieving the desired development.

Excellencies, Presidents,

The State of Kuwait seeks with all its capacities to achieve the MDG's, as well as to improve the welfare of the Kuwaiti citizens. The indicators of economic and social development in Kuwait, have surpassed the targeted averages, and have held advanced positions on both the regional and international levels, according to reports by United Nations agencies concerned with human development. Currently, unified efforts are being exerted, and all available resources are being mobilized to implement the national development plan for the period 2010 - 2014. The estimated cost of this plan is about 115 billion dollars. This is an ambitious plan that seeks to advance all the state's sectors, improve the infrastructure, raise the level of educational and health care services, as well as set the pace to make Kuwait a financial and trade center in the region.

As the State of Kuwait continues on its way of providing assistance to the developing countries, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development persist in its efforts to support and finance development and infrastructure projects in more than 100 countries, with a total value of almost 15 billion dollars, which makes the median of the amount provided double the percentage of the GNP agreed upon internationally for official development assistance. The State of Kuwait wishes to renew its commitment to continue providing developmental and financial assistance to the states in need, for the realization of stability and progress in those countries as well as for the advancement of their capabilities and abilities to fulfill their developmental needs.

Excellencies, Presidents,

We recognize the tremendous international responsibility, the difficulties and the challenges that stand in the way of many countries to reach the MDG's and achieve their purposes. However, we are convinced that the goals are achievable if supported by the political will, the total belief in the importance of joint and collective work, as well as our adherence to the resolutions we take and the commitments we make. Let us all work together for the good, for the dignity and for the welfare of our peoples guided by the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the total respect for international law.

Thank you Your Excellencies.