

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A ship passes by as Kuwait City's skyline is seen in the background. — Photo by Isiam Al-Sharaa

# Kuwait, UK governments launch 'Gulf Women in Cyber Security Fellowship'

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KUWAIT: Salem Al-Othaina, Chairman and CEO of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), and Tim Voase, Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy, launched the inaugural meeting of the 'Gulf Women in Cyber Security Fellowship' yesterday. The Fellowship is sponsored by the UK Government and brings together 22 of the most talented female cyber security professionals working in government, academic, critical infrastructure and commercial roles in the six GCC countries.

In his opening speech to the Fellows, British Deputy Head of Mission Tim Voase said: "Statistics show that generally, women are globally under-represented in cyber security, and STEM careers more generally and have to overcome high barriers to get to their positions. Yet women in the Gulf hold key cyber leadership positions. These women set the tone on cyber security for their countries and the region and provide a positive example for the whole world. The UK government is delighted

to have established this Fellowship to support these remarkable women, and to ensure that their example and experience can benefit future generations of female cyber security professionals here and around the world."

Welcoming the Fellows on behalf of the State of Kuwait, Engineer Layal Al-Mansoury, Director of Cyber Security at CITRA said: "It is our pleasure to host the first GCC Gulf Women in Cyber Security Fellowship meeting and workshop. The fellowship group is an impressive selection of active women specialists in cyber security in the GCC. I hope this will be a great experience for everyone, and a stepping stone to achieve greater outcome."

The Fellowship is implemented by the UK Government's partner PGI and includes a program of two regional meetings, and a three-day trip to London. It aims to build strong relationships and multi-lateral links between future cyber leaders within the GCC and UK, as well as promoting positive role models for gender diversity within the cyber security industry globally.



KUWAIT: Speakers attend the panel discussion during the conference.

## EQUATE shares sustainable strategy achievements

KUWAIT: The EQUATE Group, a global producer of petrochemicals, presented its sustainability strategy and showcased its efforts to achieve gender equality during a conference on the 'Sustainable Development Goals: Achievements and Challenges' organized by the Women's Research and Studies Center at Kuwait University and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Held from November 11th to 13th, the Conference hosted EQUATE President and CEO, Dr Ramesh Ramachandran, in its opening ceremony.

Dr Ramachandran said: "Throughout my 30 years of experience in multiple countries and despite the regional differences, I have realized that when it comes to women empowerment, teams face similar gender equality challenges. They are able to hire talented women but always lose them in their mid-career. Our biggest challenge is to make sure we don't lose these women that we have invested in so much, because teams featuring gender equality are much more productive and successful."

Dr Ramachandran added: "For us to succeed or to grow and to be more profitable, it is imperative that the teams and the staff in whichever functions we choose, rely on the presence of women, which enables companies like ours to be more successful and we see that in EQUATE here in Kuwait." The Group leveraged the UN Women's Empowerment Principles (UN WEP) as a benchmark for its policies and practices, and developed a 3-year action plan in its duty stations in Kuwait, USA and Canada. The plan included the launch of its global program named 'ELEVATE' that aligns with the fifth SDG on gender equality and the New Kuwait Vision, and aims to strengthen and promote gender equality.

In a panel discussion during the conference, Performance Management Rewards Senior Specialist at EQUATE and also a member of the 'ELEVATE' program, Lulwah Al-Munifi, presented the structure of the program. Meanwhile, the Senior Enterprise Applications Consultant at EQUATE and also a member of the 'ELEVATE' program, Zainab Haider, focused on the action plan to successfully implement the UN WEP. Today, women account for only 22 percent of the workforce in the global oil and gas sector, one of the smallest ratios among major industries. EQUATE's goal is to increase the percentage of women working in this industry from six percent to 10 percent within five years and empower them to partake in leadership positions.