

Local

World Bank, Kuwaiti Supreme Council host 'New Kuwait Vision 2035' presentation

Kuwait has committed leadership, clear vision, capable people: Ambassador

WASHINGTON: The World Bank hosted a presentation on the New Kuwait Vision 2035 in collaboration with Kuwait's General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD). In an exclusive interview on the sidelines of the presentation, GSSCPD Secretary General Dr Khaled Mahdi shed light on the General Secretariat's participation in the World Bank meetings, saying it included many components, such as the project recently signed with the World Bank on the labor market and creation of the national jobs strategy for the country. He added that they also discussed the launch of the human capital plan, saying "Kuwait is one of the early adopters of the human capital index that came from our interest to look at the quality of investment in the human capital in the country and how it can be reflected in the global competitiveness of Kuwait."

Mahdi further noted that the Women Business and Law (WBL) index was also discussed "with regard to the gender balance," as well as the "country engagement frame" (program of the World Bank), in which "we emphasized that this coming engagement of the World Bank in Kuwait for the cycle 2020-2024 should be aligned with the Kuwait Vision 2035 and should be also aligned with the Kuwait National Development Plan

(KNDP) III 2020-2025."

"We agreed on the importance of the alliance of all the World Bank activities with the national plan which to us is considered a crucial and very important step," he affirmed. Meanwhile, World Bank's Regional Director of GCC Countries Issam Abouseiman said that the 2035 vision is "a very credible ambitious vision that will be a big game changer for Kuwait." He indicated that the KNDP III presented today took the lessons from KNDP I and II and put in a very practical term "taking into consideration the political economy, as now it is about implementation on the ground." He stressed the importance of "perseverance and patience" that are the foundations of development and reform, saying the vision would change what Kuwait would look like by 2035.



Human capital plan discussed

Three Cs

In the meantime, Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah shed light during the presentation on Kuwait's "three Cs", affirming "we have a Committed leadership, we have a Clear vision and we have Capable people," voicing confidence that these three Cs will ensure that "we will get this over the finish line and Vision 2035 will be a very big success."



WASHINGTON: Officials attend a presentation hosted by the World Bank on the New Kuwait Vision 2035 in collaboration with Kuwait's General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD). — KUNA

During the presentation, Dr Mahdi discussed the Kuwait Vision 2035 of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah that aims to "transform Kuwait into a financial and trade hub, attractive to investors, where the private sector leads the economy, creating competition and promoting production efficiency, under the umbrella of enabling government institutions, which accentuates values, safeguards social identity, and achieves human resource development, as well as balanced development, providing adequate infrastructure, advanced legislation and inspiring business environment."

Dr Mahdi indicated that the Vision was translated into the seven pillars of the New Kuwait, which are Creative Human Capital, Effective Civil Service, Developed Infrastructure, High Quality Health Care, Sustainable Living Environment, Sustainable Diversified Economy and Global Positioning. He noted that "each pillar has a number of strategic programs and projects that are designed to have the most impact on achieving the vision of a New Kuwait 2035," implemented through the KNDP under the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development. —KUNA



Hamad Al-Mezyan

Kuwait reiterates commitment to help fulfill UNSDGs

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait renewed its commitment to achieve the 17-point UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) for 2030 in collaboration with global partners, said a statement by a Kuwaiti diplomat. This affirmation was delivered by the Kuwaiti diplomatic attache Hamad Al-Mezyan to a UN committee meeting for states having difficulties in implementing the UNSDGs. The Kuwaiti diplomat affirmed that it was the time for all states to fulfill their commitments to the UNSDGs, adding that it was also paramount to assist and collaborate with underdeveloped countries to achieve the development goals.

Mezyan welcomed the recent UN Secretariat report concerning the support of sustainable development in countries facing special circumstances in the way of development achieving the ambitious UN 2030 plan. Though some states have improved their efforts to meet the UNSDGs in the last four years, there are still some countries, which are not meeting their commitment, he said. Mezyan added that some countries were not able to fulfill their obligations due to conditions out of their control. Those countries, facing special circumstances preventing them from fully implementing their development plans, have achieved a considerable amount of development; however, there should be a collective effort to help such states to continue efforts to better their situations, the Kuwaiti diplomat indicated. He said that it was paramount to establish a mechanism to prevent natural disasters from affecting efforts for development, noting that climate change and disasters have played a role in slowing development in several countries.

Mezyan reaffirmed that his country was willing to provide a helping hand to all countries facing problems in their quest for development, revealing that Kuwait - through its various funds - had helped around 107 states in going forward with their development plans via handing loans and grants. The Kuwaiti diplomat stressed that to achieve development, countries should work on implementing agreements aimed at providing support to partners facing difficulties to achieve their development goals, adding that accords connected with the environment must be fully observed to prevent natural disasters from affecting plans for development. — KUNA

US-Kuwait Business Council officially launched

WASHINGTON: The US-Kuwait Business Council (USKBC) was officially launched at the US Chamber of Commerce with "exclusively" focusing on promoting the commercial relationship between the two countries and to serve as a "permanent home" for both business communities to "deepen and grow trade and investment ties." The new Council will work with both private and government sectors "to set priorities and share best practices to advance both countries' economic competitiveness in a growing global marketplace," the US Chamber of Commerce said.

In a speech at the Friday event on behalf of Kuwait's Finance Minister, Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah affirmed that this Council "formalizes an already strong and long-standing relationship between the private sectors of our two countries. A relationship that stretches back to more than 70 years. A relationship that extends across a range of sectors." He presented an update on latest reforms taking place in Kuwait, noting that "Kuwait is currently on a path of reform, with the objective of gradually transforming our economy," a path known as the 'New Kuwait.'

Ambassador Sheikh Salem indicated that since its unveiling in 2017, the Kuwait National Development Plan (KNDP) dubbed 'New Kuwait' "is proving to be an effective roadmap that will transform our economy, create jobs, attract foreign direct investments and facilitate knowledge transfer." He affirmed that these reforms have "contributed to Kuwait being shortlisted for the first time, this year, among the Top-20 economies improving the most on the ease of doing business by the World Bank."

"The unbreakable bond between our two countries was earned by both sides over decades of hard

work. A bond built on shared interests, business interests, social interests, diplomatic interests and political interests," Sheikh Salem remarked. He reiterated that "it is a bond that is also based on flows of trade and commerce and the exchange of ideas. Today this bond has grown and evolved to include an exchange of business opportunities between our two countries."

Meanwhile, US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross said in a speech "today we celebrate the fruit of collective efforts that fortify our commercial bond." He added that the new Council "will provide our governments with the recommendations we need in order to improve the economic relationship even further," where companies from both countries will work to flourish each other's market. He stressed that Kuwait's "ambitious" New Kuwait Vision 2035 "should provide" opportunities in Kuwait for American companies in various sectors, saying the "success" of American firms in foreign markets often depends on "the success of our government to government interaction." He shed light also on Kuwait being ranked 97 in the 2019 World Bank Ease of Doing Business. "The Council will be a key source of advice that would help promote opportunities for American companies in Kuwait so we look forward to working with you," Ross remarked. "The US and Kuwait have a long rich heritage together."

In the meantime, Executive Vice President and Head of International Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce Myron Brilliant said in a statement that "the US and Kuwait have maintained strong diplomatic ties for many years, and the Chamber is excited to build upon this solid foundation and enhance the commercial engagement of this partnership."

"We appreciate the support we have received from many stakeholders in both countries to establish this council, and we look forward to growing this program," he added. Meanwhile, Sheikh Salem affirmed that the economic relation between the two countries is a historic one that goes back 70 years. He added that the launch of the Council "is a natural progress of that relation and this Council will enable the American and Kuwaiti companies to interact and have a shared platform to further boost the trade relations between two countries."

"This is an important day for the Kuwait and US trade relations as this Council will be an effective mechanism promoting the bilateral relations in all domains," he affirmed. He stressed that "it took a lot of time and effort to establish this Council and we are happy that this day has come." Furthermore, vice president of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce Steve Lutes said, "we are delighted to launch the Council as it is a new platform focused on growing the bilateral economic relationship between the two countries."

"We are delighted to have the Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross



US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross

attend and we are focused on growing and deepening the economic bilateral relationship between the US and Kuwait," he affirmed. He added that "a platform like this is a permanent commitment to growing the economic relationship and it brings together the government with the private sector so it provides a huge opportunity for discussion." The US-Kuwait Business Council is comprised of US and Kuwaiti companies, representing a broad cross-section of industries and sectors. — KUNA



Kuwait confirms continued financial fulfillment to UN

NEW YORK: Kuwait has confirmed it will continue with its efforts to fulfill all financial obligations to the United Nations, stressing its readiness to reconsider proposals to face the UN financial crisis. This came in a speech delivered by Doha Al-Reesh, a political researcher with Kuwait's delegation to the United Nations, on Friday during the discussion of the item 'improving the financial situation of the United Nations' before the fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly.

In her speech, Reesh called for resolving such issues, especially after the introduction of a one-year budget system for the first time in nearly four decades. She encouraged the General Secretariat to consider finding funding solutions for the UN that does not contravene Article 17 of the Charter to avoid such a crisis in the future. In that context, she stressed on impor-

ance of financial stability of the organization and full execution of all its missions in different regions of the world. She pointed to the letter by the UN Secretary-General, in which he warned that the liquidity crisis will worsen to the point where it may affect salaries of staff, a situation totally rejected by both Kuwait and all member states.

Reesh appreciated the Secretary-General's efforts to improve the UN financial situation, supporting statements by concerned officials who noted that a sound financial status depends on extent of Member States' fulfillment of their financial obligations as scheduled. It was unacceptable to demand that the organization fulfill all its mandates in the areas of international peace and security, sustainable development, efficient preservation of human rights, and strengthening its accountability while the international community failed to meet its financial obligations towards it, she explained. The researcher has stressed importance of the UN financial stability, expressing concern that the UN will once again go through a financial crisis that will negatively affect its performance and weaken its functions and destabilization. She called on the member states to pay all their financial dues to the UN on time and without any preconditions.

Reesh affirmed Kuwait's keenness to honor its



Doha Al-Reesh

financial obligations as soon as possible as it is considered one of the first countries in this regard. She noted that over the past years, Kuwait has been included in the list of honor with member states which have paid all their contributions on time and without any preconditions. —KUNA