

Local

US official reaffirms commitment to strong relations with Kuwait

Middle East remains a priority for Biden administration: Leaf

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf affirmed during her visit to Kuwait her country's commitment to strong relations with Kuwait, saying that this visit, which will include several countries in the region, is meant to reconfirm the agenda of US President Joe Biden for the Middle East and limit escalation of conflicts in a number of countries.

During a press conference on Wednesday, Leaf said the Middle East will always be in US' interest and priority. "The president has said repeatedly the US cannot and won't do everything alone, so we work in partnership with Gulf countries, Egypt, Iraq and others to fight and help the region come through the crisis. We have food security, climate change and health issues, and we must address these problems," she said.

Regarding the situation in Iran, she said: "Iran is a major contributor to regional insecurity; the problem is growing over time. It has been providing advanced weaponry and missiles and all sorts of defense technology. Iran poses the biggest threat to regional security and stability." Leaf affirmed that the State Department is leading efforts to pressure Iranian leaders to make them renounce their nuclear ambitions, noting that this effort is the US government's approach that includes allies and partners.

On Iran's ongoing protests that were sparked by the death of a young woman Mahsa Amini, Leaf affirmed that the Iranian government's actions are considered a suppression and violence against freedoms. "We support the Iranian people in their current cause. We want them to gain their freedom and choice in whether to cover their hair or not," she said.

Concerning the US-Palestinian relationship, she said: "Our priority is to resume and rebuild the poor



Barbara A Leaf



Dana Stroul

state of relationship between the US and Palestinian leaders for the benefit of Palestinian people and their security. We have connected with senior levels of Palestinian authorities to encourage reconnecting. The US president has a deep commitment for Palestinians to have a state of their own."

Leaf revealed that the US had a different perspective from the OPEC+ group on reducing production, because the group's decision will raise economic pressures. "OPEC+'s decision to cut oil production came at the worst possible moment and will add to global inflationary pressure. The international community has just emerged from the pressures of the epidemic, and some countries are still suffering from the repercussions of the Ukrainian war, and we do not see the time for the decision to reduce production," she said.

Dana Stroul, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, affirmed the importance of the US-Kuwait strategic partnership, revealing that both countries will exchange views on regional security challenges, including border security threats. "We are here in Kuwait to see the country's view on how we can develop our partner-



KUWAIT: (Left to right) Public Affairs Counselor at US Embassy Christy Watkins, Assistant US Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East Dana Stroul and Charge d'Affaires at US Embassy to Kuwait James Holtsnider during the press conference. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

ship. Both sides agreed on the importance of continuing to advance the US-Kuwait defense partnership through joint training and regional cooperation to address shared threats," she noted. Stroul added: "Kuwait has been a generous host to many US forces, especially to fight Daesh, along with our partners."

She revealed that joint training and exercises are to be held to enhance the bilateral relationship and to make sure that both countries can work together in the event of a crisis. "Every single member of the

GCC is important, where there is a value placed in our relationship. Our goal is to work with GCC countries to share intelligence and information, and to make sure that our air forces, navies and armies can work together. We are committed to working together to face sea, air and land threats," Stroul said.

Leaf is visiting several countries in the Middle East such as Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman from Oct 11 to 22 to meet senior government officials and representatives of NGOs and civil societies.

Workshops on cancer, obesity held in Kuwait

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Secretary General of the Gulf Federation for Cancer Control Dr Khalid Ahmad Al-Saleh said the federation, in cooperation with Cancer Aware Nation (CAN), organized two workshops as part of the Pink October awareness program. The first workshop was held under the theme 'Updates in guidelines for women's cancers in Kuwait', during which several experts from GCC countries including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman were hosted to update these guidelines, which are updated every two years.

Dr Saleh spoke about the importance of presenting the guidelines correctly. "The number of women affected by cancers in Kuwait reached 856 as per the cancer register in 2018, 475 of which were Kuwaiti women, and 381 non-Kuwaitis. This indicates an increase in discovery of tumors among women, and this makes us responsible to continue renewing the guidelines. The cancer control committee of the GCC recognized their importance and a recommendation was issued to benefit from the efforts in the GCC. Doctors can find the best means of diagnosing and treatment according to each stage," he said.

The Gulf Federation for Cancer Control held another workshop online under the theme 'Updates in the relationship between obesity and most common cancers', during which several experts from Egypt and Kuwait were invited. The lecture focused on the types of obesity and the rate of its spread in the world, as Kuwait is fourth in obesity prevalence worldwide. WHO said in 2016 that 39 percent of adults have excess weight and 13 percent suffer from obesity, while 38.3 million children under five are overweight and obese, based on 2019 statistics.

The two-day workshop discussed the effects of obesity on medication and its role in complications. It also discussed the effect of obesity on various types of cancers and the role of medicinal nutrition in this field. He said a strong relationship was proven between obesity and many chronic diseases including tumors, diabetes, heart attacks, and liver and gallbladder diseases, in addition to cancers of breast, uterus and ovaries.



Experts pose for a photo on the sidelines of the workshop



Workshop in progress

Several recommendations were issued including the establishment of a scientific research center that includes GCC countries, have a general strategy to carry out awareness campaigns about the harms of obesity in which government and all

NGOs should participate in, and apply laws to positively reflect on changing current food patterns which lead to increased cases of obesity, starting from kindergarten. Dr Saleh lauded the support of CAN for these efforts for the sake of humanity.

US Embassy launches 'Discover America Week'

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Embassy of the United States of America to Kuwait announced on Wednesday the launch of "Discover America Week", where the embassy will organize events highlighting different aspects of American culture and expertise, including music, food, sports, technology, education and tourism.

In a press statement, James Holtsnider, Charge d'Affaires at the US Embassy to Kuwait, said: "We were doing Discover America since 2009, but for the last three years, due to the pandemic, we could not do it. This is a great opportunity to showcase American opportunities for Kuwaiti businesses and Kuwaiti opportunities for America to strengthen commercial ties."

Holtsnider affirmed that these activities are a great opportunity to put a spotlight on the strong US-Kuwaiti friendship. "There are a lot of business opportunities, especially technical investments, coming to Kuwait. We are working very hard to expand commercial ties as well as educate people in both countries to increase trade and explore areas that broaden and deepen ties," he said.

Holtsnider revealed there will be a lot of American brands. "We will be talking about opportunities in Kuwait. We will have a discussion on tourism with travel agencies and work very actively with visas, although Kuwait is doing well, as citizens can get a visa within a few days," he said. He indicated that after three years of the COVID-19 pandemic, this is a chance to remind people about opportunities in the United States, noting the Kuwaiti ambassador to the US has been very active and traveling around the US to talk about the opportunities in Kuwait for the US and vice versa.

The Discover America Week events will be held from Oct 22 to 29. It will include a 5K Fun Run, Huntertones Live, food shows by Chef Nasser, BBQ Night, American Car Show and a Harley-Davidson Ride event.

Awqaf launches contest for Waqf Research

KUWAIT: Secretary General of Kuwait Awqaf Public Foundation Saqer Al-Sejari announced on Wednesday the launch of the 13th International contest for Waqf Research under the patronage of His Highness the Deputy Amir and the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Al-Sejari said that the competition is part of the 16 coordinated projects being implemented by the Secretariat with several authorities worldwide, most notably the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah.

He noted that the competition aims to encourage the scientific research process by raising the spirit of scientific competition and highlighting the endowment system and making it a priority for researchers, individuals and institutions, stressing that the research topics presented need further study due to their significance and importance.

On his part, Representative of the Supervision Committee Dr Adel Al-Mutairat said that the number of participants reached 340 researchers from all over the world. Al-Mutairat noted that the prize pool for the contest reached \$45,000 (around KD 13,960) divided to three divisions, the 1st prize worth \$ 6,000 (around KD 1,858), 2nd worth \$5,000 (around KD 1,548) and the 3rd worth \$4,000 (around KD 1,240). Al-Mutairat said that competitors can find more information about the tournament on www.awqaf.org.kw. —KUNA

MoE to reopen probe in teacher 'hair cutting' case

KUWAIT: Head of the parliamentary education panel MP Hamad Al-Matar has contacted the education ministry regarding a teacher who has been accused of cutting a student's hair in order to find out the facts, after the teacher said she was wrongfully accused. "The accused expatriate teacher has filed a grievance as a result of an investigation which found her guilty of allegedly cutting a student's hair after students said the teacher constantly threatened to cut students' hair if they do not follow instructions," sources told Kuwait Times.

The teacher said the accusations made against her are not truthful and she did not threaten or do anything that violates educational rules, and asked to reopen the investigation. Mubarak Al-Kabeer educational area sent its report to the undersecretary of the ministry to relieve the teacher from her duties. The report showed that the teacher was hired locally.

Meanwhile, instructions have been given to proceed with employment of GCC citizens, stateless residents (bedoons) and children of Kuwaiti mothers after they passed their interviews and were accepted after approvals. These procedures have lately stalled. The Undersecretary for General Education Osama Al-Sultan notified the management department the importance of finishing procedures and sending lists to the department in order to publish employment decisions, especially since their grades are available and there are no obstacles to their employment.