

Economic and strategic vision

By **HIS EXCELLENCY KHALED AL-DUWAISAN GCVO**

AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM



KHALED AL-DUWAISAN

has a postgraduate diploma in public administration from the University of Kuwait. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1970 and served as Diplomatic Attaché. He joined the Kuwait Embassy in Washington DC in 1975. After serving as Ambassador in Romania and the Netherlands he was appointed Ambassador to the UK in 1993.

At the outset, we would like to welcome FIRST Magazine represented by the Chairman of its Board of Directors and all its employees. It gives us great pleasure to present this document about the economic and strategic visions of the State of Kuwait. Fast political, social, economic and security changes that our contemporary world witnesses have led many countries to restructure their visions, goals and objectives in a different manner than those during the era before the end of the cold war. The State of Kuwait, which is situated in an extremely sensitive geographic location, realized during the first years of its independence in 1961, that it needed a more responsible and balanced approach towards internal and external policies which would allow Kuwait to adapt better to the regional and international variables dominating the international system.

The State of Kuwait believes that openness and constructive communications are the way forward, friendship and peace to be the key principles, and human development and economic prosperity to be the overall objective.

The fundamental shifts that have defined the region since 2003 meant that Kuwait has established its economic policies and vision as follows:

- Taking advantage of Kuwait's important geographical location to support its development goals, via building a new city in the north of Kuwait called "Silk City", which has a huge harbour and railways to connect it to the northern Kuwaiti cities and also to the rest of the Gulf States.

- Turning Kuwait into a financial and business hub in the region for the benefit of its national economy through enhancing the role of the public sector and raising the standard of economic and commercial infrastructure. This is being implemented to enhance the competitive capacity of the country,

following the initial development of the infrastructure such as ports, airports and railway networks. In addition, Kuwait has started to develop its legislative system to become a magnet for investment on the domestic, regional and international levels.

- Kuwait has undergone a transition from the existing systems, based on central decisions, to rules that are more transparent and focused on accountability in order to prepare the ground for democracy and freedom. In fact, Kuwait has expanded the base of both political participation and political institutions. A decree that gives women their full political rights was issued and civil society organizations have been active in the defence of issues that concern public opinion. The monopoly structure in the newspaper market has been terminated, and new licences for the establishment of more than ten newspapers were issued, along with new private television stations.

- Finally, the State of Kuwait focuses on exchanging views on all the key issues. This involves following up on facts moving political events in both the regional and the international spheres, which are now in urgent need of further efforts, in order to strengthen the security and the stability of the Middle East region as well as the world.

For Kuwait, political cohesion and economic integration are at the top of the strategic agenda, in order to work together in the face of various regional and international challenges. The State of Kuwait supports any efforts that promote economic democracy as well as maintaining political relations with countries around the world, emanating from the belief that economics and politics are considered to be the cornerstones of international relations.

The State of Kuwait welcomes and is always ready to discuss and coordinate with its friends around the world in order to achieve common aspirations in support of anything that would contribute to strengthening cooperation with sister nations in the region and friendly countries around the world. In particular, the State of Kuwait looks forward to strengthening its historical and special relationship with the United Kingdom in all aspects, whether it be political, economic, or cultural.

We reiterate our gratitude and appreciation to FIRST in providing us with the opportunity to publish this article about the economic policy of the State of Kuwait and its prospects for the future.

British Prime Minister David Cameron with Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, Jassem al-Khorafi

