



The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations

Address

By

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Minister of Foreign Affairs

at the

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General Debate – Seventy Sixth Session**

UNHQ

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In the Name of Allah the most Gracious and Merciful.

Your Excellency Mr. Abdullah Shahid,
President of the Seventy-Sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly,
Your Excellencies, Heads of Delegations,

We are delighted, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly in its current session, wishing you every success in conducting its work. We also thank the former President, His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkir, for his efforts in carrying out the work of the last session in an efficient and effective manner.

Mr. President,

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations, and we, the leadership, government and people, are proud of the cooperation, partnership and commitment we have achieved with this international body to achieve the goals and objectives of the United Nations to serve all humanity. We also express the Kingdom of Bahrain's appreciation for our close cooperation with the United Nations and underlining our determination to continue contributing to the work of the United Nations, supporting its efforts and noble principles intent for the benefit of the countries of the world, while protecting the rights of the people to security, peace, stability and prosperity.

Mr. President,

Today, we stand in this hall and witness the first steps in the recovery from COVID-19, following last year's virtual session, which proved that international cooperation and global partnership are essential to deal with the risks of this pandemic, and to address its effects on human safety and health.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, under the leadership and guidance of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, took all the necessary measures to be fully prepared to face the repercussions of this pandemic, harnessing all capabilities

and efforts to protect citizens and residents alike and provide the necessary healthcare for all, without discrimination.

The national efforts, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, played a pivotal role in the speed of the response and developing pre-emptive strategies and plans to deal with all scenarios, before the announcement of the first case in the Kingdom in February 2020, with all measures being taken to protect society from the risk of the pandemic. The Kingdom also followed the “tracing, testing, treatment” strategy to minimize close contacts and limit the spread of the virus in society, under the supervision of the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus, which was formed to set plans and protocols for dealing with the developments of the virus. In addition to that, an integrated media strategy was put in place for optimised media engagement, to meet the challenge of all expected scenarios, pre-emptively and instantaneously, and the COVID-19 Alert Level Traffic Light System was also adopted, which is an advanced mechanism with clear criteria, consisting of four levels, on the basis of which the various sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain operate or close, while maintaining freedom of movement and keeping all air, land and sea ports open throughout the period of combatting the pandemic.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has provided more than 2.5 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine, free of charge, to citizens and residents. Its national vaccination campaign succeeded in vaccinating 74.8% of the total population as of August, and 93% of the total population eligible to take the vaccination. Bahrain has also conducted more than 6 million PCR tests, which is one of the highest number of tests per capita in the world. In addition, the Kingdom of Bahrain has been first in implementing many treatment protocols related to the virus.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has taken a series of measures aimed at protecting the health of citizens and residents on the one hand, and preserving the economy and the livelihood of citizens on the other hand, with the launch of a financial and economic stimulus package worth more than BHD 4.5bn (about 12 billion US dollars), equivalent to a third of the Kingdom of Bahrain's GDP, aimed at

supporting the economic sectors affected by the pandemic, as well as the private sector and citizens, and supporting wages and protecting jobs.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has also strengthened its cooperation and coordination with the World Health Organization to confront the repercussions of this pandemic, and we are proud that the World Health Organization has designated Manama as the first healthy city in the Middle East region.

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Bahrain reaffirms the importance of the pivotal role of the United Nations in addressing vital international issues, and in strengthening the foundations of international peace and security for the good of humanity. In doing so, we stress the Kingdom's commitment to all international conventions and laws, and to working to achieve the goals and objectives of the United Nations.

My country is working to strengthen its cooperation and partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the field of promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom, and providing its full support to our efforts in this field.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently signed a Declaration of Intent with the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Kingdom of Bahrain to participate in the preparation of the National Human Rights Plan, which we hope will act as a comprehensive framework for the initiatives, projects and goals that my government intends to implement in the field of human rights protection.

My country has been keen to promote and protect human rights in compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and has worked in this context to advance Bahraini women and integrate their needs into the development process to uphold the principles of equal opportunities and equality, including equality in salaries and wages, to achieve an equal partnership to build a competitive and sustainable society.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has also maintained its Tier 1 status in the annual US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report for the fourth consecutive year.

My country's government also approved a law on alternative sentencing providing a qualitative leap forward in reform and rehabilitation, in line with modern criminal justice policies in the protection and promotion of human rights.

Mr. President,

My country's government has been keen that its action plan and economic vision be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the main pillars, policies and initiatives aimed at the benefit of the human being as the primary goal of development, and has done so through three priorities: strengthening the basic pillars of the state and society; financial sustainability and economic development; and securing a supportive environment for sustainable development.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Kingdom of Bahrain have signed a Strategic Cooperation and Sustainable Development Framework Agreement, to enhance the growing cooperation between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Nations in various fields and levels.

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Bahrain shares the international community's interest in climate change and its effects on human life, and the efforts being made to mitigate its effects on the environment, and we look forward to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP-26).

My country's government has also developed an integrated plan to increase the share of renewable energy in the Kingdom's energy mix, as part of its sustainable development strategy, and to reduce carbon emissions as part of the international

efforts to counter climate change, under the directives of His Majesty the King to develop the environmental and climate situation in the country.

In this regard, we reaffirm the Kingdom of Bahrain's support for the pioneering Saudi initiative, the "Green Saudi Initiative" and the "Green Middle East Initiative".

Mr. President,

The Middle East region continues to be in a state of instability and insecurity, with the people of a number of nations suffering difficult conditions due to the wars, crises and conflicts it is witnessing. These have resulted in the loss of lives, the displacement of millions of refugees and displaced persons, and the destruction of cities, villages and infrastructure, turning the lives of these people into a painful tragedy of daily suffering, driving away opportunities for peace, security and stability.

The Kingdom of Bahrain calls on the international community to focus its efforts together on achieving security, stability, peace and prosperity in the Middle East, by adhering to the principles of the United Nations Charter and its purposes, which include non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, commitment to good neighbourliness, mutual respect, and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as strengthening international cooperation.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has always been keen to preserve the cohesion of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, due to the importance of its role in maintaining the security and stability of the region. Therefore, the Kingdom stresses the importance of the commitments included in the Al-Ula Summit Declaration, which was held in the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia earlier this year, that would promote interdependence and joint coordination and the achievement of greater cooperation and integration among member states.

The Kingdom of Bahrain chose the path of peace as a strategic option and approach to establish a permanent and comprehensive peace in the region, and to consolidate the culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence for the benefit

of the people of the region and the world, and to combat the ideology of extremism, intolerance and hatred.

The Kingdom of Bahrain's signing of the Declaration in Support of Peace with the State of Israel comes in line with the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to promote the principles of peaceful coexistence and to consolidate a culture of peace, fraternity, dialogue, cooperation and mutual respect with its noble goals endorsed by all monotheistic religions and enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

In this regard, my country stresses the need to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in adherence to the basic Arab principles, primarily preserving the rights of the brotherly Palestinian people to live in a secure, stable and prosperous nation. We call on the international community to work for a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue that meets the aspirations of the brotherly Palestinian people to establish their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the principle of the two-state solution, and resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative.

My country also supports the initiative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for a ceasefire in Yemen, in order to reach a political solution to the Yemeni crisis in accordance with the Gulf initiative and its executive mechanism, the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and relevant Security Council resolutions, namely Resolution No. 2216, to end the suffering of the brotherly Yemeni people.

My country condemns the Houthi group's continued targeting of civilians and civilian facilities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by systematically and deliberately launching ballistic missiles and explosive-laden drones, in clear violation of international humanitarian law.

The Kingdom of Bahrain calls for an urgent settlement of the issue of the Renaissance Dam, and stresses the importance of reaching a fair and binding agreement on the issue of filling and operating the dam, in a manner that preserves the water rights of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of

Sudan, and contributes to maintaining peace, security and stability in East Africa.

In Libya, we call for respecting the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Libyan state, supporting the efforts of the interim executive authority, stopping interference in Libya's internal affairs, and the withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries from Libyan territory, as well as holding elections that reflect the will of the Libyan people.

We also renew our support for the legitimate rights of the Kingdom of Morocco over its southern provinces in accordance with the Autonomy Initiative, and support its efforts aimed at finding a political solution to the Sahara issue within the framework of the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco and its development initiatives in this region.

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Bahrain, under the directives of His Majesty the King, and based on its belief in the principles of human solidarity, has taken the initiative to contribute to efforts to evacuate American citizens and Afghan nationals from Afghanistan, and to send humanitarian assistance and relief to alleviate the suffering of the brotherly Afghan people.

The Kingdom of Bahrain affirms its support for the Afghan people and the choices they make themselves without any foreign interference in their affairs. Further, it underlines the need to reach a peaceful political solution between all parties and components of Afghan society, to achieve peace and security in Afghanistan, and to meet the aspirations of its brotherly Muslim people for a free, dignified, stable and prosperous life.

The Kingdom of Bahrain calls for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East region. The Kingdom reaffirms its support for international efforts aimed at preventing Iran from acquiring the ability to develop a nuclear weapon, stressing the need for Iran to fully cooperate with the

IAEA to ensure the maintenance of regional and international security and stability.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, in cooperation with allied and friendly countries, has made continuous efforts to pursue sources of terrorist financing and money laundering, and has seen remarkable achievements in this regard, placing it first in the Arab world in the Basel Anti-Money Laundering Index.

In this context, we renew the commitment of the Kingdom of Bahrain to continue its efforts as part of the Global Coalition against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, and all extremist terrorist organizations, and to dry up their sources of funding, stressing the importance of partnership and international cooperation in combating terrorism and confronting the ideology of extremism.

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Bahrain underlines that overcoming the challenges and difficulties facing the international community, maintaining international peace and security, and achieving sustainable development with its noble humanitarian goals, requires us to harness efforts and increase capabilities to enhance cooperation and effective international partnership, and to consolidate the values of peaceful coexistence, solidarity and fraternity for a brighter and more optimistic future for the people of the world.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I am pleased to express the Kingdom of Bahrain's appreciation for what you have set out in the programme of your Presidency for the work of this current session of the United Nations General Assembly, which is full of hope, hope for accomplishing works that benefit humanity and achieve prosperity, and hope for security and peace throughout the world.

Thank you, Mr. President