

*Permanent Mission
of the State of Kuwait
to the United Nations
New York*



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STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT

DELIVERED BY

**DR. DHUHA SALEM AL SHAQQAT
MEMBER OF THE KUWAITI UNION FOR WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS AND
THE COMMITTEE FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS**

BEFORE THE

**FIFTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE
STATUS OF WOMEN AT THE UNITED NATIONS
BEIJING + 15**

WEDNESDAY, 03 MARCH 2010

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK**

**Madam Chairwoman
Ladies and Gentlemen
Assalamu Alaikum Warhmatu Allah
(The Peace and Mercy of Allah be Upon You)**

At the outset, I wish to convey the condolences of the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait to the Republics of Chile and Haiti.

It also pleases me to commend you on your efforts and those of the august Commission to see this session succeed. I also wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate all the women in the world on the occasion of the International Women's Day.

What I heard during the last two days about sincere efforts exerted and accomplishments realized to improve the status of women in numerous countries of the world, was very heartening to me. It also pleases me to emphasize the commitment of the State of Kuwait to the Beijing Platform for Action as well as to the Millennium Development Goals in as much as they are not inconsistent with the Islamic Sharia.

Madam Chairwoman,

The State of Kuwait appreciates the total care that H.E. the Secretary-General of the United Nations dedicate to improve the status of women as well as your persistent follow-up and the efforts you exert in this field, to guarantee the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

My country is pleased to announce that it supports the new proposed structure as pronounced in the statement of the European Union in this regard.

I am glad to take this opportunity to briefly summarize what the State of Kuwait have done to implement the Beijing Plan of Action, the Beijing Platform for Action as well as the Millennium Development Goals.

In the field of education: Kuwait is very keen on making elementary education mandatory for both sexes. Whoever defies that is subjected to punishment. Kuwait is also considered among the leading states in providing free education at all levels, it finances scholarships for women and men to obtain the highest degrees, out of its conviction of the importance of education in the progress of peoples.

In the field of reproductive health: The State of Kuwait provides free primary and secondary care, it also implements preventive programmes to

protect women and children. Recently a law was enacted by the Kuwaiti Parliament requiring doing medical examinations before marriage to protect women and infants from hereditary and dangerous diseases.

While this law is mandatory for men and women alike, the state guarantees the freedom of the couple to engage or not in marriage, since this is a matter of personal freedom.

In the field of Combating Poverty: Since poverty is the problem that prevents the progress of peoples. The State of Kuwait was keen on providing decent living for all its citizens, men and women. However, women are more fortunate: whereas the State provides monthly financial assistance for divorced and widowed women. In recent years, similar assistance is provided to unmarried girls who are over the age of thirty five, and who never married or worked.

Kuwait also went beyond its geographic borders to combat poverty in the world. It established the Kuwaiti Fund for Development many years before the Beijing Declaration. The fund provides long term easy to pay loans for brotherly and friendly countries. The call by the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah to forgive the debts or the interests on the poor countries still echoes loud. The State of Kuwait under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah continues to be committed and supportive of all the efforts exerted in order to eliminate poverty worldwide.

In the field of Decision Making, the Empowerment of Women and Gender Equality: I cannot but commend that the Constitution of Kuwait provides equality to all its citizens, equality in their rights and their obligations without discrimination in gender or color. However, the participation of women politically came somewhat late. Today my country have taken giant leaps since the law of right of nomination and election was enacted in 2006. In the Parliament today there are four members who are women, another woman is the Minister of Education, and as many of you are aware, a few years back, another woman was the head of the Kuwaiti Mission to the United Nations.

Kuwaiti women also hold many leadership positions, and have proven their capabilities in this field.

In this regard, I would like to mention that the Kuwaiti Civil Service law provides equal salary for men and women holding the same post and performing the same work.

Furthermore, a committee for women's affairs was established within the Council of Ministers, and is headed by Sheikha Latifa Fahd Al Salem Al Sabah, thus lending more weight to this committee.

Almost two months ago, a law was enacted for persons with special needs, which give men and women in this category more gains.

Kuwaiti women enjoy financial independence, this is the right that Islam has guaranteed for women and Kuwaiti laws emphasize this right.

The State of Kuwait encourage its young people from both sexes to undertake private projects, through their financing by easy to pay loans from the Kuwaiti Industrial Bank.

Kuwaiti Labor law also allows working mothers, a motherhood leave. We are tirelessly pushing to make this leave be paid in full, which has not been achieved yet, the Kuwaiti Law also gives the wife of a deceased husband the priority to receive his pension payment, even if she has a salary of her own.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate, Madam Chairwoman, the commitment of my country to implement the Beijing Platform for Action as well as the Millennium Development goals in as much as they are not inconsistent with the Islamic Sharia. Also, its commitment to work on the elimination of all kinds of discrimination against women and enacting the laws that protect women from violence in all its forms.

Equality and justice that the peoples of the world aspire to are guaranteed by all heavenly religions. The Almighty Allah said in Surat Aal-E- 'Imran
"Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female"

Thank you all.