



Office of the Resident Coordinator
in the State of Kuwait

مكتب المنسق المقيم
في دولة الكويت

Address by Mrs. Valerie Cliff, United Nations Resident Coordinator
Opening of the UNHABITAT Office in Kuwait
27 November 2008

A Sallam o Aleikum

Your Excellency Sheikh Dr. Mohammad al Sabah,
Your Excellency Mr. Secretary General - Abdul Aziz Al Adsani
Friends and Guests,

It is my honour to be here today to celebrate with you the formal opening of the UN-Habitat Office in Kuwait in partnership with the Government of the State of Kuwait and the Arab Towns Organization.

The UN-Habitat Office will partner together with the Arab Towns Organization to promote sustainable urbanization and to achieve adequate human shelters for the growing population of city-dwellers throughout the Arab Region.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, or UN-HABITAT, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.

As the United Nations Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon recently reminded us on the occasion of World Habitat Day on 6th October, many of the world's most pressing challenges -- poverty, natural disasters, environmental degradation, escalating prices for food and fuel -- have important links with rapid urbanization. Urbanization changes forever the way we use land, water and energy. Planned and implemented well, urbanization can bring people choices and help them thrive. Done poorly, however, urbanization reduces safety, despoils the environment and exacerbates the marginalization of those who are already suffering and excluded.

On behalf of UN-HABITAT, I would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to the Government of the State of Kuwait and to the Arab Towns Organization for giving us this great opportunity to establish our offices here in Kuwait within the Arab Towns Organization, and we greatly look forward to continuing to work together with ATO in the years ahead.

Shukren Jezeelen.

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