

Premier Addresses 63rd U.N. General Assembly

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NEW YORK: His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah gave his country's speech at the 63rd United Nations General Assembly on Thursday.

Kuwait's visions on important issues on the General Assembly's agenda were presented during the speech Sheikh Nasser's speech was the first at the U.N. General Assembly since he became the state's Prime Minister in February 2006. Kuwait was accepted as a member in the U.N. on May 14, 1963 according to a recommendation issued by the U.N. Security Council on May 7, 1963. The 4th ordinary U.N. General Assembly accepted the recommendation and Kuwait was accepted at the U.N.'s 111th member.



Speaking at the General Assembly in New York, His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who was then the Foreign Minister, expressed gratitude of Kuwait's government and people to the assembly" members for unanimously accepting the state's request to join the U.N. He said that Kuwait, with its small population and strong belief in humanitarian values, is happy to join the U.N. at a time when several countries in Asia and Africa were liberated and became active contributors in building a world of security, peace, and prosperity.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah also said that Kuwait, which gained its independence on June 19, 1961, joined around 20 organizations, regional and international agreements prior to becoming a U.N. member. Kuwait's participation in such activities shows that it did not look at independence and joining the U.N. as a goal, but as a way to contribute in a better life for its people and peoples of the world, he stressed. His Highness concluded his speech by saying that Kuwait's people are proud to join the U.N., by having confidence in its response with the dreams of people, and believe in inevitability of the triumph of right.

During those years, Kuwait was able to gain the trust and support of all members of the U.N. and it practiced its known policy of strengthening relations among countries based on the principles of mutual respect, joint interests, and not interfering in internal affairs of other nations. Kuwait was non-aligned, supported the rights of people to determine their fates, combated racism and colonization, and announced that it complied with those values during U.N. meetings.

Kuwait believed the importance of sustaining the world's security and peace and stressed, in several occasions, the significance of the U.N.'s role regarding that matter. Before requesting to join the U.N., Kuwait became a member of several U.N. agencies and sub-organizations. Since its independence in 1961, the state joined the World Health Organization (WHO), International Labor Organization (ILO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and other organizations.

The state believed in the importance of joint action in organizing and improving all aspects of the lives of people. Between 1967 and 1969, Kuwait was elected member in the U.N. Economic and Social Council, and in 1978 and 1979, it became member of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC). Kuwait was chosen to speak on behalf of developing countries at the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) that was held in Manila from May 7 to June 1, 1979. The state of Kuwait has always been keen on assisting less fortunate countries in developing their economies and improving living conditions of their people. Even during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the state did not forget that it was part of the world.

Speaking at the General Assembly on September 27, 1990, the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah talked about the problem of debts and announced that it written off all interests on loans it provided to other countries. He also said that Kuwait would discuss with poor countries the assets of loans it offered to them, which resulted in writing off loans given to some of them for the sake of reducing their burdens. The fifth U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar, who held the post from 1982 and 1992, visited Kuwait in January 1993 and emphasized that the Iraqi invasion of the state was the first test to the abilities of the U.N. in preserving world peace and stability after the Cold War.

In November 2005, former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan visited Kuwait and discussed with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah issues of joint interest, U.N. reforms, and ways to achieve stability and security in the region. In 1995 and on the 50th anniversary for establishing the U.N., late Amir Sheikh Jaber said in a speech he gave on the occasion that most people of the world, despite their differences, agree that the organization is the world resort for solving their conflicts and problems. Kuwait seeks to support projects of reform and development of regional and international organizations. In June 2005, His Highness Sheikh Sabah highlighted that support at the South Summit in Doha. -KUNA

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PM holds talks with U.N. chief

UNITED NATIONS: U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon late on Wednesday received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah to hold discussions on a number of world issues and bilateral cooperation.

A U.N. official told KUNA following the meeting that the prime minister extended an official invitation to the Secretary-General to visit Kuwait and attend a ceremony inaugurating a U.N. House that has been built. Sheikh Nasser was accompanied at the meeting by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Sabah Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Ambassador to the U.N. Abdullah Al-Murad and the other members of the Kuwaiti official delegation.

The prime minister arrived in New York last Friday heading Kuwait's delegation to the 63rd session of the U.N. General Assembly.

On Wednesday Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Sabah Al-Sabah and the other foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) also met with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The talks focused on the situation in the Arab Gulf region, the Middle East and other issues on the General Assembly's agenda.

During the meeting the Arab foreign ministers insisted that the U.N. Security Council convene at the ministerial level on Friday to discuss Israel's settlement policies, as requested by Saudi Arabia, however the U.S. expressed its objection to this initiative. -KUNA

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