



LOCAL NEWS

Happy 64th birthday UN!

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By Velina Nacheva, Staff writer

KUWAIT: The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Kuwait hosted a reception to mark the 64th anniversary of the United Nations' establishment on Sunday. The reception was held as part of a global series of events celebrating UN Day - the day when the United Nations was founded. A large number of dignitaries and members of the diplomatic corps, ambassadors, journalists and representatives of various non-government organizations attended the event, which was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel.

In his opening remarks, Salah Bourjini, the UNDP's Resident Representative in Kuwait, delivered a message from Ban Ki-Moon, the UN Secretary General of the United Nations, in which he stressed that Kuwait has signed a National Development Program agreement with the UNDP for cooperation in the coming five years.

Bourjini said that the program focuses on the environment and economic development, the role of the private sector, democracy, and gender equality. He said that it will be implemented on the basis of the lessons learned from the programs concluded in 2008, which demonstrated the great importance of building national and institutional capacities drawing on Kuwaiti and global experiences.

He added that this year's Human Development Report showed Kuwait's rating had placed Kuwait at the head of the Arab World, asserting that Kuwait's ranking also exceeds that achieved by several industrialized countries. This, he argues, indicates that Kuwait has gained a remarkable position amongst developed countries despite the growth slowdowns or setbacks witnessed by the world. Mansour Al-Otaibi, the Director of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs' International Organizations Department, was also present at the prestigious event.

Referring to Ban Ki-moon's message, Bourjini stressed that on this day, just like on any other UN Day and every day throughout the year, "the United Nations is at work - for the planet, for jobs; for 'we the people.'" He went on to list only a few of the international organization's impressive achievements, saying, "We deliver more humanitarian aid than anyone - and to the toughest places. We vaccinate 40 per cent of the world's children. We feed more than 100 million people and are helping more than 30 million refugees, most of them women and children fleeing war and persecution. We are deploying more peacekeepers than ever - more than 115,000. In the last year alone, we provided electoral assistance to almost 50 countries. And the entire UN system has mobilized to face global economic turmoil and the social unrest it threatens," with these last words quoting Ki-moon's message.

People look to the United Nations to defeat poverty and hunger, to keep the peace, to expand education and stand up for human rights in every corner of the globe," Bourjini continued. "They look to us to stop the spread of deadly weapons and diseases, and to protect people and families hit by disasters. In December, they will look to us to seal a comprehensive, equitable and ambitious deal on climate change that will protect us all and pave the way toward a greener, more sustainable economy.

Stressing that the current period represents a unique moment in world affairs, he said, "multiple crises - food, fuel, financial, flu - are hitting us all at once. Climate change looms larger every day.

He continued, saying, "the United Nations is doing its utmost to respond - to address the big issues, to look at the big picture. We are forging a new multilateralism that can deliver real results for all people, especially those most in need. But I am also painfully aware of the distance to go and the gap between commitment and action," he cautioned. "On this UN Day, let us resolve to redouble our efforts on behalf of the vulnerable, the powerless, the defenseless. Let us stand more united than ever - united in purpose and united in action to make the world a safer, better place.