

## Kuwait national day

## Supporting global humanitarian causes

Abdul-Rahman Humood Al-Otaibi  
AMBASSADOR OF KUWAIT

The State of Kuwait and its people celebrate on this day two national occasions: the 54th Anniversary of Independence and the 24th Anniversary of Liberation of the State of Kuwait from the brutal Iraqi invasion.



On my behalf and on behalf of my fellow Kuwaiti citizens residing in Japan, I am honored to extend my heartfelt congratulations and blessings to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, and His Highness Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

It is also my honor to convey to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and to the entirety of the honorable Imperial family, sincere greetings from Sheikh Sabah and Sheikh Nawaf, along with best wishes for constant good health, bliss and longevity, and

to the people of Japan's further progress and prosperity.

The relations between the State of Kuwait and Japan have been witnessing steady progress and growth on all levels, in clear realization of the mutual agreements reached during the state visit to Japan by Sheikh Sabah in March 2012, and successively, the official visit to the State of Kuwait by H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in August 2013, in parallel with other reciprocal official visits between our countries.

Bilateral commercial and economic exchanges between our countries reached a significant number. However, our aspirations for these relations are greater than what has been achieved so far, especially given both sides share a common intent to further strengthen cooperation in cultural, scientific and technological fields.

In fact, the State of Kuwait has taken several necessary steps to help Japanese investors find favorable grounds to invest in the country and to benefit from our government's ambitious National Development Plan. Among these steps,



Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

easing the requirements of the offset program that was a stumbling block not just to Japanese companies, but also to other international companies as well. Kuwait also eased the tendering procedures for megaprojects. Moreover, in order to promote foreign investments in the State of Kuwait, the government established the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority under Law 116/2013. Its goal is improving the over-

all investment climate in the country, fostering competitiveness and encouraging more engagement in value-added investment opportunities by both local and foreign investors.

Last year saw an important milestone on the political track record of the State of Kuwait when the U.N. awarded Sheikh Sabah the honorable title of "Humanitarian Leader" and proclaimed Kuwait an "International humanitarian Center."

This proclamation is the culmination of the Amir's efforts throughout his forty-year political and diplomatic career.

Since His Highness took the helm in January 2006, he has been among the first to respond to humanitarian crises wherever they occurred around the world, chaired various humanitarian conferences and gave direct instructions to provide numerous emergency relief assistance. In parallel, the State of Kuwait is home to dozens of charity organizations known for their credibility, engagement and activity in many areas and countries around the world.

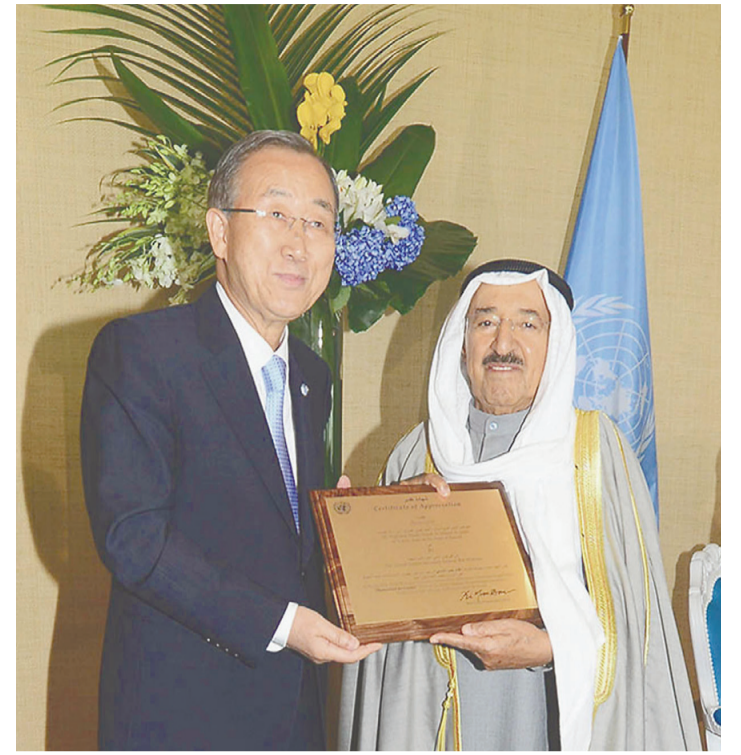
This path, which the State of Kuwait has been following since its independence and accession to the U.N., shall always be a constant pillar of its foreign policy as it is based on the belief that humanitarian aid should be provided to every country in need regardless of any geographical, religious or ethnic limits. It emerges from our country's conviction in the importance of international partnership and in unifying and promoting international efforts in order

to preserve and safeguard human life.

The State of Kuwait has translated these main beliefs into fact, based upon which it has kept pace with numerous changes, and by developing and modernizing the methods of delivering assistance, it has helped clear countless obstacles arising in this regard. His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah's initiative to abrogate interests on soft loans provided to a number of developing and underdeveloped countries, and which was announced at the 43rd session of the U.N. General Assembly in 1988, became a precedent in international humanitarian work.

Sheikh Sabah has been following the same approach since he took over the reins of leadership on Jan. 29, 2006. This led to the steadfast increase of Kuwait's humanitarian initiatives, among which I would like to mention a few:

At the fourth Islamic Economic Forum held in Kuwait from April 29 to May 1, 2008, His Highness ordered the establishment of the Decent Life Fund and the State of Kuwait



U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon pays tribute to the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in September, 2014. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT

contributed \$100 million to the fund's capital to address the negative effects of the world food crisis on underdeveloped countries. Prior to that, Sheikh Sabah announced Kuwait's donation of \$150 million in support of a program financing scientific research related to energy, environment and climate change.

On Jan. 29, 2009, at the first conference of the Arab Summit for Economic and Social Development that was held in Kuwait, His Highness launched an initiative for supporting and encouraging small and medium enterprises based on

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Liberation Tower rises above the skyline of Kuwait City. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT

## Growing government, business ties

Yuriko Koike  
CHAIRPERSON, JAPAN-KUWAIT  
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP  
LEAGUE

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of Kuwait.

It is with great pleasure that we see the relationship between Kuwait and Japan deepening at various levels in recent years. In 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Kuwait and had meetings with H.H. Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and H.E. Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber



Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah during his stay in Kuwait. The two sides shared the view that they would construct a "comprehensive partnership." Prime Minister Abe directly paid tribute to Kuwait's generous support in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. I believe the gesture by Abe, who was the first Japanese prime minister to visit Kuwait in six years, added momentum to deepen our bilateral relations.

Also, parliamentary exchanges have been deepening. Last March, members of the Kuwait-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League visited Japan and participated in the events on the third anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake along with Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and

Empress Michiko. It was a great opportunity to convey, from Japanese parliamentarians to their Kuwait counterparts, our appreciation for Kuwait's generous support such as supplying train cars for the Minami Sanriku Railway in Iwate Prefecture that touched Japanese people's hearts.

Among the Gulf countries, we place special importance on the relationship with the National Assembly of the State of Kuwait, which embraces a democratic election system and encourages female participation, and we will further promote such exchanges between our assemblies.

In addition, Kuwait is currently proceeding with large-scale infrastructure development projects based on its national development plan and an expecta-

tion for Japanese investment and technical cooperation is rising accordingly. Last October, H.E. Hind Sabeeh Al-Sabeeh, minister of social affairs and labor and state minister of planning and development, who is in charge of this plan, visited Japan, and Japanese firms showed high interest in it. Also, it is a welcome indication that Kuwait is easing conditions of its counter-trade offset program regarding investments.

As such governmental and parliamentary bilateral relations develop, business interest regarding Kuwait's national development plan will expand as well. I sincerely hope the cooperation between Kuwait and Japan will further deepen at multiple levels, not only in the energy sector, but also in various fields.

## Heartiest Greetings and Congratulations to the State of Kuwait on the Occasion of the 54th Anniversary of National Day and the 24th Anniversary of Liberation Day

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Chaudhry Asif Mahmood  
CEO, Pak Japan group of companies

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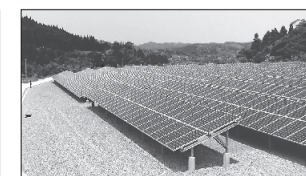
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JAPAN-KUWAIT SOCIETY

Chairman: Yasushi Kimura



# Kuwait national day

## Strong ally in peace, welfare

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exploiting available local resources of goods and services with an estimated capital of \$2 billion. Kuwait provided \$500 million to this development initiative. During the same summit, His Highness announced the donation of \$34 million to cover the needs of the U.N. Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), as well as a donation of \$200 million to the Palestinian Authority.

At the Donors Conference for the Reconstruction of East Sudan that was convened in Kuwait on Dec. 1 and 2, 2010, a contribution of \$500 million was announced by Kuwait to finance infrastructure projects and services in East Sudan.

In July 2012, in his remarks at the African Union Summit, His Highness announced that Kuwait would shoulder the costs of equipping the new headquarters of the General Commission of the African Union in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

At the opening ceremony of the first Summit of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue held in Kuwait from Oct. 15 to 17, 2012, Sheikh Sabah donated \$300 million to finance development projects in non-Arab Asian countries.

When Kuwait hosted the third Arab-African Summit in November 2013, His Highness instructed the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development to offer soft loans totaling \$1 billion to African countries over the following five years. Sheikh Sabah also announced that the State of Kuwait intends to earmark an annual financial award of \$1 million, in the name of the late Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Sumait, focusing on development research in Africa.

In March 2009, the State of

## Mutual economic cooperation, cultural exchanges lead to friendly relationship

Yasushi Kimura  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-KUWAIT SOCIETY



On this auspicious occasion of the 54th National Day of the State of Kuwait, I am pleased to offer on behalf of the members of the Japan-Kuwait Society our sincerest greetings and congratulations to His Highness Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness Crown Prince Sheikh Nawwaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah; and His Excellency Abdul-Rahman Al-Otaibi, ambassador of Kuwait to Japan, as well as to the friendly people of Kuwait.

Ever since Japan and Kuwait established diplomatic relations in 1961, the two countries have made every possible effort to cultivate a close friendship, as well as economic ties. As the proverb has it that a friend in need is a friend indeed, the close ties between Japan and Kuwait proved it true, particularly when Japan helped liberate Kuwait from

Iraq by donating \$13 billion and supporting restoration efforts by sending minesweepers. Another example of this friendship was seen when Kuwait helped Japan recover from the unprecedented disaster in the aftermath of 2011's Great East Japan Earthquake by donating 5 million barrels of crude oil.

We are pleased to see exchanges of our uppermost influential figures coming to prominence with His Highness the Amir visiting Tokyo in March 2012, and Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visiting Kuwait in August 2013, bringing the two countries closer than ever.

In terms of recent economic cooperation, two memorandums on transportation and public works were signed between Japan and Kuwait last October, in conformity with the principles specified in the Joint Statement made at the time of Abe's visit to Kuwait. Those two memorandums of cooperation were exchanged in Tokyo between H.E. Minister of State for Development and Planning and Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Hind Al-Sabeeh and Japan's Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Akihiro Ohta.

While in Japan, H.E. Al-Sabeeh at-

tended a seminar on the investment environment in Kuwait organized by Keidanren. She appealed to Japanese business leaders for investment in Kuwait by way of participation in its "Upcoming Second Mid-range National Development Plan," stressing that her country was enthusiastic about improving its investment environment. As a vice president of Keidanren, I was present at the seminar and saw the strong desire and expectations Kuwait has for Japanese cooperation throughout the process of its development projects.

Elsewhere, the Japanese-Kuwait Businessmen's Committee has met almost every year alternately in Tokyo and Kuwait since 1995 to exchange views and discuss economic and technological cooperation. To date, the committee has met 19 times, the latest of which took place in Kuwait in February, with more than 80 representatives attending from both countries. These activities are expected to generate an elevated level of economic and industrial cooperation between our nations.

The year 2014 witnessed tangible utilization of Kuwait's contributions for reconstruction in the earthquake-stricken Tohoku area of Japan. In

April, the Sanriku Railway resumed full operations after more than three years of partial suspension caused by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The recommencement came to realization thanks to the huge amount of Kuwaiti support that enabled the railway to purchase eight new train cars. At the ceremony celebrating the resumption of train operations, Ambassador Al-Otaibi, who was invited as guest of honor, received thunderous applause from local inhabitants who had gathered at the ceremony site.

Behind the excellent official relations, the Japan-Kuwait Society has laid the groundwork for academic and cultural exchanges over the past 50 years. With cultural and Arab-Islamic subjects as a focal point, we will keep doing our best to promote friendly relations and mutual understandings between our people.

Last, but not least, I would like to offer my sincerest appreciation to Ambassador Al-Otaibi for his amazingly powerful efforts to enhance friendly relations between our two nations. Hoping that our excellent relations further develop, I pray for the prosperity and progress of Kuwait and its peace-loving people.

Kuwait announced a donation of \$200 million to the Palestinian Authority through the Gaza Reconstruction Program, while it has previously expressed its pledge of providing \$300 million in support of the Palestinian Authority during the Donors Conference held in Paris in December 2007. Additionally, based on an agreement signed with the World Bank in November 2012, Kuwait contributed \$50 million to the Palestinian Reform and Development Program (PRDP). In July 2014, Kuwait also provided a donation of \$10 million in assistance to the brotherly Palestinians.

Furthermore, the State of Kuwait has rushed to the relief of countries devastated by natural disasters such as Bangla-



Skyscrapers (right) and the Souq Sharq Mall are among the major attractions in Kuwait. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT



des, when it was hit by Cyclone Sidr, to which it provided \$10 million. In the aftermath of the devastating Great East Japan Earthquake in

March 2011, the State of Kuwait donated 5 million barrels of crude oil — equivalent to two days of Kuwait's daily oil production. In 2012, it also contributed \$250,000 to support the victims of the earthquake that hit Turkey, in addition to providing \$10 million to the people of the Philippines affected by Typhoon Haiyan.

Moreover, amid deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Syria during the past three years, and in response to U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's appeal, the State of Kuwait hosted the first and second International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria in January 2013 and 2014 respectively. Total pledges announced at the meetings amounted to \$3.8 billion, of which Kuwait contributed \$800 million delivered in full to U.N. specialized agencies and humanitarian-related international and non-governmental organizations. Kuwait will also host the third Pledging

Conference on March 31, 2015, in response to a request by the U.N. Secretary-General.

I would also like to refer to the government of Kuwait's decision in 2008 to allocate 10 percent of the overall humanitarian aid that Kuwait provides to countries affected by natural or man-made disasters to the U.N. and its humanitarian-related specialized agencies, thus solidifying its willingness to support the humanitarian role of the U.N. Kuwait also announced in 2014 that it was doubling its annual voluntary contribution to the U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) from \$500,000 to \$1 million.

The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, considered one of the oldest development institutions after being established in 1961, has provided loans exceeding \$17 billion throughout its history benefitting 103 countries in every part of the world.

In conclusion, as I reflect on the words of Sheikh Sabah,

"The acts of benevolence and philanthropy are inherent values in the hearts of the Kuwaiti people," I am bound to emphasize the humane similarities between the Kuwaiti and Japanese people. Japan's leading contributions over decades in support of humanitarian causes around the globe have been of outstanding generosity aimed at saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity. These shared values between both countries have been the cornerstone of their half century-long strong friendship and comprehensive partnership.

In a world where humanitarian needs are ever increasing, every member of the international community faces a historical, moral, humanitarian and legal responsibility that requires us all to combine our efforts and work continuously toward saving lives, preserving human dignity and safeguarding international peace and security.

### Heartiest Greetings and Congratulations to the State of Kuwait on the Occasion of the 54th Anniversary of National Day and the 24th Anniversary of Liberation Day



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