



**Speech of His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad
Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on the
Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Diplomatic
Relations between Kuwait and Switzerland**

Friday, 25th November 2016

In the name of God the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, and Peace and Blessings of God be upon his Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his companions,

His Excellency Yves Rossier, Secretary of State,

His Excellency Mr. Guillaume Barazzone, Mayor of the City of Geneva,
Mr. Pierre Willa, Director of International Affairs Office at the University of Geneva,

Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of the Cooperation Council of the Gulf Arab States and the Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Their Excellencies the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Office in Geneva,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we celebrate more than fifty years on bilateral relations between Switzerland and Kuwait. It is a celebration that takes me 50 years back in the depths of my memory and reminds me of the years I spent as the first Kuwaiti diplomat appointed Consul General to the Swiss Confederation in Geneva in 1966, as well as permanent representative to the European Office of the United Nations. I always recall the day when I presented my credentials in the famous old town of Geneva. I always remember this beautiful city with its antique appearance, with its streets, alleys, gardens and famous lake. I still keep my friendships and cordial relations in the Swiss society.

Yet Geneva existed in my heart long before that. I arrived in Switzerland for the first time in April 1959. I did there my university studies and I graduated from the prestigious University of Geneva founded in 1559. I learnt from its science, culture, beauty, refined taste and concepts of freedom and democracy. And maybe my years at the University of Geneva laid the foundation for my thinking and my lifestyle. From its antiquity I acquired the originality, from its intellectual and cultural diversity I



acquired modernity, from its strict programs I acquired the seriousness, from its high ranked teachers I acquired the subtlety, from its classrooms, its library, its research and its studies I acquired a wealth of knowledge, and from its administrative body I learnt discipline and precision.

On this occasion, I wish to sincerely thank all those I learnt from, or from whom I acquired something that has enriched my discernment, especially my teachers, and the teachers of the university in general, as well as the administrative body. I would like to extend a special thank you to the University Council, and to the Rector Yves Fluckiger for the ScholaGenevensis Medal you are going to award me, on which is marked 1559, the date of the founding of the University of Geneva, and of which I will always be proud. I would also like to thank the leaders of the Hardt Foundation for hosting this celebration in its prestigious building, in the hall of its library, which gives an academic and scientific aspect to our celebration.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In this speech, I would like to give you an idea of our foreign Kuwaiti policy, based on respecting the principles and objectives set out in the charters of the United Nations, the Arab League and the Cooperation Council of the Gulf Arab States, and on benefiting from international balances, strengthening our relations with emerging international political forces, and investing them in order to benefit at the national level, avoiding regional conflicts, as much as possible, supporting international peace and security, and refusing threatening world peace or promoting injustice and aggression. Kuwait condemns all forms of global terrorism and rejects attempts to link Islam to acts of violence committed by few people.

At the regional level, Kuwait seeks to expand and develop the role of political, economic and collective security integration with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of others, to respect treaties and bilateral agreements, to promote mutual respect when it comes to relations with other countries, and to treat them with equality, based on the principle of respect for sovereignty.



On the economic level, Kuwait is trying to pursue a balanced oil policy and to seek to stabilize the markets and protect them against volatility and disruptions.

On the human side, Kuwait's foreign policy is characterized by a distinctive humanitarian trait through the adoption of the principle of supporting development projects in developing countries, providing humanitarian aid to disaster areas, and supporting victims of natural disasters, wars and conflicts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A qualified group of Kuwaitis working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deals with the execution of our foreign policy. This policy, whose pillars were established by my mentor His Highness the Emir, is characterized by a worldwide humanitarian aspect, so much that the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon described the Kuwait, at the celebration held in honor of His Highness the Emir at the United Nations Headquarters, as "the global humanitarian center", and appointed His Highness the Emir "Leader of Humanitarian Action" , highlighting the positive and pioneering humanitarian role of Kuwait.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We in Kuwait will never forget the position of the Swiss Confederation supporting Kuwait during the aggression of Saddam Hussein, nor how the city of Geneva reacted to the suffering of our people, by opening the doors of its schools in front of our children and providing free services to all Kuwaitis living on its territory. We will never forget the position of the Swiss government as per the issue of prisoners and missing persons through the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross. We'd like to praise the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross, headquartered in Geneva, in supporting the suffering peoples and providing them with humanitarian aid.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to point out our strong relationship strengthened along the recent years, to such an extent that Switzerland has



become one of the most favoured countries for Kuwaiti businessmen, thanks to its secure financial environment and to its fair and equitable justice system. In addition to this, Switzerland is the country favoured by Kuwaiti tourists whose number has reached nearly 40,000 in recent years. It is to be mentioned that a large number of Muslim tourists no longer interrupt their summer holidays to return during the month of Ramadan, thanks to the respect of religions that distinguishes your country. Over the last few years, most hotels across Switzerland have dedicated a prayer room for their Muslim guests and have begun offering Iftar (Ramadan dinner that begins after sunset) and Suhur (a meal served before the Sunrise) to those who fast during Ramadan. This is only a reflection of the distinguished relationship between the two friendly countries.

Finally, allow me to express my thanks for your kind invitation, and my great pleasure to be awarded the ScholaGenevensis Medal from the prestigious University of Geneva.