

WORLD CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century

Vision and Action

UNESCO, Paris, 5 – 9 October 1998

VOLUME V – PLENARY

Kuwait

Note1: To meet UNESCO publishing standards, some editing of papers has been required.

Note2: Authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in signed articles and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

The State of Kuwait

**Speech of His Excellency Dr Abdul Aziz Ghanim Al-Ghanim
Minister of Education and Higher Education**

*In the Name of God
The Most Merciful and Most Gracious*

Honorable Chairman of the General Conference
Honorable Chairman of the Executive Board
Respected Director General
Distinguished directors, delegates and members

Our best regards to all who are gathered here from various countries in an effort to uphold culture, science and literature. All have their roles to play in refining minds and developing science, so that it will help develop heritage to survive and build up the present which will open the way for future horizons. It also bridge the communication among nations which help to make the world an integral unit where all contributes their effort in working toward making a universe with hopes to achieve peace and integrity, understanding, developing science and jointly contributing to the destiny of the world. It mutually benefits its people and are able to share knowledge which will ultimately benefit their culture and science.

Universal co-operation has become a target that all of us are looking forward to benefit from. Therefore, we seek the reasons to acquire and spread it in every aspect of human activity. It will help in overcoming all obstacles that are created among races to prevent from enjoying the benefit of getting closer. It will help sharing human intellectual, science and human endeavours without keeping for one society and avoiding others.

UNESCO, by holding conferences, has aimed, since its establishment, to bring all countries closer to each other. It encourages universality with its objective to develop the welfare and security of the world. This motto of universality cannot be achieved without proper understanding, sharing of ideas, reconciliation between nations and in ourselves.

The State of Kuwait is doing its best. Education is given the top priority in Kuwait. Education, culture and arts are the means through which minds are united and individuality is built up and sense of responsibility is formed as long as the nations share their culture, arts and literature. They become closer to each other to accomplish the aim - that is universality which will help the universe to be ruled and directed by the best values and can achieve its target of welfare and security.

If education with its systems and curricula can provide science, culture and art to achieve their targets, we can conclude that every effort provided in this filed is considered as an outstanding step and positive movement in promoting the standard of humanity. Its efforts are directed towards providing the best of its sources and powers for the benefit of humanity.

The State of Kuwait is performing its role positively. Education has been given the top priority to be available for all citizens and expatriates who live in Kuwait with the motive of eradicating the communication gap among all the nations of the world.

In short, our efforts in the field of education is to achieve our objectives to cope with the rapid developments of the present age.

The stages of formal education starting form kindergarten to the secondary levels and college education, we are conscious to provide the right guidance to the students. We help them to acquire culture and education which help them to achieve the right job in various private and government sectors. Students have the right to choose to specialize in one or more subjects which ultimately help them to work efficiently to achieve a successful career. It also encourages the talented to continue their education in universities in all specialized units in Kuwait University or outside supported by the Kuwaiti mission under

the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education to pursue their studies in specialized universities in other countries.

Curriculum, books and methods are updated periodically. Training courses are conducted accordingly for teachers to be in level with the new curriculum changes adopted. The university attracts the best teachers who are specialized in various fields from a number of countries and share their knowledge with Kuwaiti staff members in teacher, research and career development.

Higher education provided at the University of Kuwait and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training are with utmost care. The University of Kuwait was established 32 years ago with an initial of 418 students enrolled. Now it teaches 19,456 male and female students and has 920 teaching staff. It works to achieve a specified mission to increase knowledge, human resources, scientific heritage to increase their efficiency, their capacity by developing scientific and technical research to benefit and to be benefited.

Taking into account of the goals set forth, I am proud to convene that the University of Kuwait, with its various faculties have tried to achieve the following objectives:

- * Pursuing scientific advancement and researches to solve the problems of the society and develop it economically, socially and culturally.
- * Serving the society in developing its great resources and values and moral behaviour to solve it problems.
- * Strengthening an inherited civilization.
- * Working for the development of scientific research and co-operation with other institutions.

The University attracts the best teachers who are specialized in various fields from a number of countries and share their knowledge with Kuwaiti staff members in teaching, research and career developments.

The curricula are developed according to the rising demands of the community and the researches are modeled to an international level.

The programmes are being evaluated with the help of international experts who are periodically invited from various specialized, scientific institutions of other countries.

The university is provided with modern scientific equipment, laboratories, audio and visual libraries. Also, it has a centre for Computer Services with latest equipment.

Higher studies are conducted in various faculties for each subjects. There are research centres in the university such as Centre for Strategic and Future Studies. Centre for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, etc...

The University is independent to pursue researches in all the fields with required financial support from the government of Kuwait.

Currently, a private university is being considered by some concerned authorities for which proper encouragement is ensured by the country.

Though I have mentioned the University, its roles and its various activities. I would like to point out that the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training also deals with the same faculties of technology, basic education, commercial and health studies.

Further, there are training institutes which organize courses in various fields of services ranging from a period of one year or more as required by the society such as: first-aids, fire extinguishing and dealing with the environmental problems.

With the aim of fostering international co-operation the University, the authority and the scientific institutions exchange teachers, invite visiting professionals and sending members of the teaching board to international conferences and award them substantial financial support for research at other universities of the world.

Kuwait is endeavouring to promote higher education and formal education to the highest standards it can achieve. The objectives of the society includes development and pave the way to international co-operation to familiarize the values of science and enhance the ideas of researches and studies. We are with the hope that its endeavour will fulfill what is expected from a country which believes in science, culture and art and their roles simultaneously helping to develop international relations with all the nations.

At last I would like to thank you all, for your kind attention.

With best regards and respect, I conclude.