



**Speech of His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad
Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held at the French
Embassy, on the International Francophonie Day
Sunday, 22nd March 2016**

Dear Ambassador of the Republic of Senegal and Dean of
diplomatic corps,
Dear Ambassador of the French Republic,
Dear Ambassadors of the Swiss Confederation, Canada and the
Kingdom of Belgium,
Dear Ambassadors of the Diplomatic Corps,
Dear the Representative of the International Committee of the Red
Cross,
Our Francophone Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Like every year in March, the Francophone world starts preparing
for the celebration of the International Francophonie Day. Every
year, Kuwait joins this beautiful cultural celebration, in which it has
participated for the last few years. It is always my pleasure to
celebrate this day with you, and to express my admiration for the
Francophonie and for its contribution in serving the dialogue and
diversity of cultures in this globalized world. I would like to thank
Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Senegal, Canada, France,
Switzerland and Belgium for the organization of this event and this
distinguished evening.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A language is a social necessity, since the spoken word is the most
important and easiest means of expression. It forms the basis of
ideas' formation and the proof of the human being's intellectual
activity. It is the tool that human beings use in their exchange of



ideas, opinions and feelings; and as the Czechs say: "You live a new life with every new language you learn, but if you speak only one language, you live life only once."

The richness of vocabulary in a language gives its speakers the ability to express themselves with ease and precision. The French language is ranked the third amongst the world's languages in terms of its richness and abundant vocabulary. It is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with the number of speakers estimated at 274 million and one of the most widely used languages on the Internet. Above all of that, it is the language of romance! The famous writer Albert Camus said on this subject that he had only one homeland: the French Language. The president and poet Leopold Senghor said that this language "is the language of struggle and liberation"; it sometimes carries "the sweetness of the breeze", and other times "the power of thunder".

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The celebration of the Francophonie is not only the celebration of a universal language; it is the celebration of the culture created by this language, the culture of freedom, of equality, of fraternity, and of the values of tolerance and the cooperation between the different cultures. This culture is not different from ours in Kuwait, which has made our society open to other cultures. The culture of our ancestors was enriched by their commercial relations with other nations, through their voyages by sea to the different harbors scattered along the Indian Ocean, through their travels across the arid and extensive deserts and through their contact with other cultures, languages and ideas. This culture taught us how to tolerate, accept and recognize others and this qualifies Kuwait to be a vital and active cultural center in the region. Hence, I insist that all the friendly countries, especially the Francophone countries, should start their cultural investments in the region from Kuwait, because the qualifications that distinguish Kuwait and its people are capable



of helping any cultural investment based on the exchange of ideas, productive values and intellectual and cultural productions to succeed.

During our celebration of the Francophonie Day last year, I mentioned the cultural event that took place in Kuwait, which was the opening of the department of the French language and its cultures in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Kuwait, in collaboration with Paris-Sorbonne University. I said on that occasion that we hoped to have another new cultural event that could strengthen the Kuwaiti and Arabic cooperation with the Francophonie every year. It seems that the Arab cultural cooperation with the Francophonie is progressing regularly in this region, because this year I received news confirming the upcoming opening of a branch of the Sorbonne University in the State of Kuwait. It is an important cultural event that will play an essential role in strengthening the cultural rapprochement, enriching the academic domain and developing Kuwaiti-francophone relations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the end, I would like to wish you the best on this beautiful celebration.