



**Speech of His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed
Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on the
occasion of the visit of the former UN Secretary-
General Ban Ki-moon and the former President of the
Federal Republic of Austria Heinz Fischer**

On Monday, 11th February 2019

His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon,
Former Secretary-General of the United Nations,
His Excellency Mr. Heinz Fischer,
Former President of the Federal Republic of Austria,
Members of the Advisory Board of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for
Global Citizens
His Excellency Major General Khaled Fouda,
Governor of South Sinai,
Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the diplomatic Corps
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's my pleasure to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon,
former Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency
Mr. Heinz Fischer, former President of the Republic of Austria, the
Advisory Board members of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global
Citizens and the accompanying delegation, who are our guests on
the occasion of the third session of the Advisory Board of the
Centre, held in the State of Kuwait. You are all most welcome
among your friends in Kuwait.

Diplomatic relations between Kuwait and South Korea date back
to 1979 and since then, both countries have sought to consolidate



these relations. We hope to see them extend to cooperation agreements between the two countries.

As for Austria, its neutral role vis-à-vis the various conflicts in the world, allowed it to participate significantly in peacekeeping operations and other humanitarian efforts led by the United Nations. Its capital Vienna, is one of the four headquarters of the United Nations in the world.

And we cannot but pay tribute to Egypt, the land of Al-Kananah, which was mentioned in the holy books. Egypt and Kuwait have established over the years distinguished diplomatic relations, which resulted in the signing of agreements and memoranda of understanding in many areas of bilateral cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Global citizenship is an old dream that human beings have had since the network of interpersonal relations has expanded, the means of communication between people have spread, and the barriers among the peoples have disappeared. Some philosophers and intellectuals have called for it a long time ago. Various perspectives led to that idea. When asked: Where are you from? the Greek philosopher Socrates would answer: I am an international citizen. He never said: I am an Athenian citizen or a Greek citizen. History tells us that when the Roman Empire became an international authority, the philosophy calling for global citizenship arose. Perhaps, it is because of the influence of this philosophy, that the Roman Emperor Caracalla abolished, in 212 AD, the famous decree which limited the Roman citizenship to the inhabitants of Rome only, and changed it into a global citizenship for the free inhabitants of the Empire. It was similar to the situation of the Abbasid State, whose citizens used



to travel from Tashkent to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Arabian Sea to Spain. The Jewish Minister ibn Naghrillah, the Christian physician Jabril ibn Bukhtishu, the Magian astronomer Neopeth the astrologer, and the Moslem mathematician and physicist Ibn al-Haytham would travel around talking and thinking, without any restrictions, as if they were global citizens.

I would like to point out that the idea of global citizenship does not mean the abolition of national, religious or cultural diversity in our world. This diversity is a priceless human resource. Global citizenship means, to a great extent, the elimination of the barriers created by this diversity, the discovery of our cultures on this planet, and the identification of the human commonalities, in thought, religion, arts, literature, food and folklore, in order to maintain the world peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under the current conditions of our tense world, our threatened environment, and the growing disparity between poverty and wealth, the idea of establishing the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens comes just at the right time to help reduce those challenges and threats. The Centre's perspectives are based on the philosophy of global citizenship, which means building a sense of belonging to a common destiny for all the inhabitants of the earth; however, the goals focused on increasing the participation of youth and women in achieving sustainable development in education, health, social protection, job opportunities and environmental protection. This is a smart move that seeks to attract more attention to its goals by expanding the social categories of our planet's population, where youth and women constitute a high proportion.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

The State of Kuwait is committed to the goals of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which was held in 2015 and it has worked on implementing these objectives at the national level in an integrated and interrelated manner with its economic, social and environmental dimensions. This was under the guidance and follow-up of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad. Our interest in Ban Ki-moon's Centre comes in line with our faith in the objectives of this summit, and therefore we all in Kuwait welcome the convening of the third meeting of the Advisory Board in the State of Kuwait. We hope that it will be accompanied by the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Centre and the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development. We also look forward to the announcement of the first programs of the Centre during this meeting.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to reiterate my warm welcome to you and to the members of the accompanying delegation, and I would like to assure you of my deep pride in your presence among us and would like to wish you the best of luck.