

**Message of the State of Kuwait to the HLPF
On the Occasion of the 2023 SDGs Voluntary National Review
19 April 2023**

In 2015, Kuwait made an all-embracing decision to integrate Agenda 2030 within the country's long-term Vision. Vision 2035 – *New Kuwait*, which consists of seven broad pillars, fully endorses and structurally integrates all 17 SDGs and 169 targets, along with their indicators. Ever since, the state has been leading extensive national awareness, implementation and coordination efforts within the triple premise of social, economic and environmental sustainability, aiming to realize the ultimate ambition of Leaving No one Behind.

As was the case with the first voluntary review report in 2019, Kuwait has opted for a Whole-of-Nation Approach (WNA) in the preparation of VNR2. The aim was to enable a range of national actors and stakeholders at the public, private, the academic and civil society levels, to participate in the Review process and to report on their respective achievements, ongoing programmes, as well as the challenges being confronted; making Kuwait's VNR2 a true national report.

Through a well-researched and well-documented account, Kuwait's second VNR has provided an authoritative record of many significant accomplishments made so far, and outlined the remaining challenges under the cross section of the goals and targets. It has depicted and portrayed with robust and itemised data and substantiation, Kuwait's unrelenting policy and institutional efforts in diligently pursuing implementation of all Goals and Targets, in spite of the many challenges, including the adverse effects of COVID-19.

Like so many countries, Kuwait witnessed a significant shift in the development priorities with the spread of the global pandemic. The outbreak exerted an unanticipated pressure on the health system, disrupted the economy and adversely affected all walks of life. VNR2 documented Kuwait's comprehensive, effective and widely integrative response to the pandemic. It recorded the many lessons learned from the pandemic in matters of health, food security, social protection, welfare system, the environment, climate change and others, and highlighted the ensuing short to mid and long-term policy decisions and program engagements that were made, and which aimed at achieving sustainability and building back better. Beyond the national boundaries, VNR2 recorded Kuwait's contributions in terms of delivering emergency aid packages to developing countries and its support at the GAVI COVAX Advance Market Commitment Summit. In the wake of the pandemic, Kuwait initiated several mega projects that were designed along integrated, mutually beneficial sustainable development vectors and policies. Many projects have been completed; others are underway.

One of the structural challenges in the country was the limited availability of data and statistics. As of 2019, sustained investments and capacity development programs have been implemented to overcome the systemic, institutional and technical dimensions of the data limitations. As a result, the data challenges reported in VNR1 have translated into concrete achievements in VNR2. Indeed, significant and persistent progress has been accomplished over the last few years at the institutional, managerial, technical, data gathering and information sharing and dissemination level. Accordingly, authoritative, robust and regular data can now be generated and used for targeting, tracking, and monitoring different goals and targets. VNR2 has provided evidence of this quantum leap in the meaningful and illustrative data and statistics that have been used, and which have added a significant policy and prospective value to the analysis and reporting therein.

VNR2 has also reflected across the different goals and targets the rising interest countrywide in Agenda 2030, and has highlighted the mounting support of a cross-section of national constituencies and stakeholders. It has shown how a growing number of actors, partners and community groups, including many layers of policy, implementing and oversight government agencies, the academia, civil society and corporate and private sector partners have now significantly engaged in incorporating, defending, promoting and regularly reporting on different components of

sustainability. Indeed, sustainability and the three SDGs foundations are increasingly gaining ground in the country, and gradually permeating Kuwaiti public policy making, culture and society.

Through the narrative analysis, pages, figures, and tables and through an in depth and thorough assessment of the 2023 Review and non-2023 Review goals and targets, VNR2 has documented the country's commitment to an all-inclusive, equal opportunity and dignifying human development for all, and to achieving the triple SDGs objective of economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

VNR2 reiterates Kuwait's ratification of most relevant global and regional environmental agreements. It has acknowledged the country's unwavering commitment to furthering its prominent position regionally and internationally, in the fields of international human development, and in advancing global and sustainable wellbeing, and fostering human rights and well-being, diplomacy and cultural exchange.