

## The Kingdom of Bahrain

### Positions for the General Assembly Plenary

---

#### **I. Assessing the Impact of Long-Term Refugee Camps, Squatter Villages and Slums in Developing Member States**

In the words of Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, “It is necessary for governments to entrust to the private sector a basic role in planning, financing and contributing to finding an environment most suitable for living and in the development of new infrastructures.” Bahrain aims to bring changes with development programs that are intact and that have had successful outcomes. The Kingdom of Bahrain supports the UN-HABITAT towards establishing advanced devices for pro housing finance. In 2008, the Kingdom of Bahrain renewed support to the UN-HABITAT donating \$1,000,000 USD. In 2007, Shaikh Khalifa received the Special Citation of the Habitat Scroll of Honor in recognition of his leadership in achieving Millennium Development Goals. Bahrain is an urban and settled society that has experienced an increase in population overtime. We recognize however that our hardships are not as severe as those experienced by some other countries around the world.

Bahrain recognizes the negative effects of slums, squatter villages, and refugee camps and acknowledges these problems as global issues. Bahrain aims to improve the settlements through financial and government support. The Kingdom of Bahrain has successfully reduced poverty and has brought social justice through inclusive housing policy, housing finance systems and good urban governance. Bahrain takes note of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in Article 25 which states that (1) “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.” Bahrain takes note of *A/Res/66/165*, adopted on March 22, 2012. This resolution recognizes the alarming rate of internationally displaced persons throughout the world, for reasons including armed conflict, violations of human rights and natural or human-made disasters, who receive inadequate protection and assistance. The Kingdom of Bahrain remains, conscious of the serious challenges that these problems are creating for the international community.

Bahrain is devoted to improving the relationships between developing member states in assessing the impact of long-term refugee camps, squatter villages and slums. Bahrain will continue to support countries facing these issues. The Kingdom of Bahrain has contributed \$50,000 USD to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the near east (UNWRA). The contribution will help UNWRA to deliver critical health, education, and humanitarian programs for five million Palestine refugees in the region, through 700 schools, 137 primary health centers, and cash and food support for approximately 290,00 of the poorest refugees. The Kingdom of Bahrain regularly contributes to the Agency, contributing \$495,000 USD to its core programs since 2000. The Royal Charity Organization of Bahrain has funded a library, health center, and a school for Palestine refugees in Gaza. The UNWRA and The Bahrain Royal Charity Organization have signed an agreement in which Bahrain will finance three reconstruction projects in Gaza. These projects include reconstruction, furnishing, and equipping of health center of the Khan Younis refugee camp, a new library open to the public at Al Fakhoura School in Jabalia Camp, and a new preparatory boys school in Jabalia. Investing in education is a start. Bahrain encourages the committee to spend money wisely investing in children, building schools, buying more books, and adding more teachers. Children are our hope for the future. What better way to improve the world by improving and advancing the people who are in it.

#### **II. Resource Security: Combating the Depletion of Natural Resources and Addressing the Need for Renewable Energy**

The Kingdom of Bahrain recognizes the need for renewable energy and takes note of the depletion of natural resources. We encourage the use of new and renewable energy. Although our economy remains highly dependent on oil and natural gas. Bahrain is moving towards a renewable energy future with plans for our first major solar energy project. Bahrain is also investing in utility scale wind turbine on new commercial developments. The Bahrain Petroleum Company has made agreements for a five megawatt distributed smart solar energy that will bring solar and smart grid benefits to our nation. The project will follow smart solar technology developed in the U.S. by Petra Solar to generate electricity in a reliable way that will eventually create jobs at different skill levels in Bahrain.

The Kingdom of Bahrain supports General Assembly Resolution *A/RES/66/206*, adopted on March 13, 2012. This resolution acknowledges the need for global awareness of the importance of new and renewable sources of energy and low emission technologies. There is a need for more efficient use of energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and the environmental- friendly use of traditional energy resources, as well as the promotion of access to modern, reliable, affordable and sustainable energy services. Bahrain notes the regard the initiative of the Secretary General “Sustainable Energy for All.” Increased innovations and technologies can help pave a way for the development of Bahrain and the creation of more renewable energy sources. Bahrain is fully committed to achieving its environmental sustainability and energy goals and assisting others to do the same.

Bahrain acknowledges the dangers of water scarcity and essential for the development of our nation. Bahrain has launched the TSE Phase II program treating sewage effluent and utilizing recycled water. The program involved construction work to establish new transmission lines and distribution networks. We have also established new reservoirs and pumping stations. Bahrain has recognized Grundfos as a solution to issues concerning the limitation of water. Grundfos involve a system of taking sewage water irrigating the water which involves cleaning the water and reusing it for crops. Bahrain supports General Assembly Resolution *A/Res/64/292*, adopted on August 3, 2010. This resolution acknowledges the importance of the human right to water and sanitation. Bahrain recognizes that everyone has the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation. The Electricity & Water Authority (EWA), academia, industry, and government, demonstrates Bahrain’s commitment to solve challenges of energy security, climate change, and economic development through global partnerships and collaboration. This is the first phase of a national energy plan to generate electricity from renewable resources. Bahrain encourages the committee to promote jobs that focus on renewable energy. Bahrain agrees to help neighboring countries that face issues concerning the limitation of water and renewable resources. Bahrain believes it is important to also invest in our future. The issue of the depletion of natural resources not only affect this generation it also affects the future generation.

### **III. Developing Strategies for Disaster Risk Reduction and Economic Mobility in Turbulent Economy**

The Kingdom of Bahrain supports General Assembly Resolution *A/Res/66/199*, adopted on February 28, 2012. This resolution acknowledges the importance of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. It also stresses the importance of the continued substantive consideration of the issue of disaster risk reduction activities for, inter alia, the achievement of sustainable development. Bahrain notes that the UN has released a Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction. The report was prepared by the UN International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, which oversees the development of disaster risk reduction policy. The Kingdom of Bahrain also notes that global disaster risk is on the rise because of unsafe cities, environmental destruction, and climate change. These factors jeopardize the lives of many across borders. Developing nations are prone to disasters on account of lack of government attention, unplanned urbanization, and deplorable economic conditions. Bahrain recognizes that risk hits people living in poor rural areas and slums. Bahrain believes that there should be a shift in development practices with an emphasis disaster planning.

The Kingdom of Bahrain also takes into account actions limiting the impact of disasters on populations by improving squatter settlements, providing land and infrastructure for the urban poor, strengthening rural livelihoods, and protecting ecosystems. A study was based on a massive database, with information called from UN, governmental, scientific, and academic resources. This was developed by the financial support of Bahrain, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, and the United Nations Development Program. Current issues in Bahrain regarding the environment includes desertification which results from the degradation of limited arable land, periods of drought and dust storms; coastal degradation (damage to coastlines, coral reefs, and sea vegetation) resulting from oil spills and other discharges from large tankers, oil refineries, and distribution stations; lack of freshwater resources which is limited to ground water and sea water. Bahrain acknowledges preparedness and response is vital to responding to such disasters.

The Kingdom of Bahrain continues to seek and attract foreign investment and business to diversify our economy and step away from oil and gas production. The U.S. Bahrain Free Trade Agreement which took effect in 2006 has increased U.S. commercial interest in Bahrain. The Naval Support Activity (NSA) is the emergency management that supports activities that provide for the organizing, training, and equipping of military and civilian personnel to prepare and respond to the impact of natural, accidental, or civilian threats to surrounding communities in Bahrain. The Kingdom of Bahrain strongly recommends that all UN member states emphasize the importance of education in disaster prevention, and support local and national incentives to reduce the risk of disasters.