

Bahrain to combat poverty

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Bahrain will join international organisations in developed and developing states to combat poverty, the Prime Minister, Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, said yesterday.

Addressing the Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOCO) meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in Geneva, Shaikh Khalifa reiterated that Bahrain had eradicated extreme poverty by establishing a framework to provide the needy with education and training opportunities to enable them to join the labour market.

He said Bahrain was one of the most advanced economies in the Gulf which was on the fast track of progress and development. The Kingdom is exerting efforts to reduce dependence on the oil resources by attracting foreign capital.

The oil resources are being used to transform the Kingdom into a hub of financial services, investment, tourism and industry.

Shaikh Khalifa called on the international community to work on a global economic balance that invigorates the poor.

He also called on the developing states to be more effective within the globalisation system, resolve their growth problems and attain stability.

The Premier also called on the UN Millennium Development Goals to meet the needs of the poor and tackle educational, health, housing, environmental and climate issues.

Later, Shaikh Khalifa visited the President of State Council of Geneva, Charles Beer, who congratulated him on winning the UN-Habitat Award. Beer affirmed that the award reflected the success of the Bahraini government's policies in developing the standards of living for citizens and upgrading the housing facilities.

The meeting reviewed bilateral relations and means of bolstering cooperation as well as the latest regional and international developments.

Shaikh Khalifa also received at his residence in Geneva Arab ambassadors in Geneva who congratulated him on winning the UN-Habitat Award.

The Premier lauded Arab leaders' efforts towards further development of their countries and affirmed that cooperation between the Arab countries was necessary to achieve comprehensive Arab unity.

Shaikh Khalifa stressed that the UN-Habitat Award was an honour for all the Arab countries. He also met a number of mediapersons and said the award was the result of the success of the policies and projects initiated by His Majesty the King, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

The Premier reiterated the Bahraini government's keenness on continuing to develop the citizens' standards of living and providing them with all essential needs, with a focus on housing, health and educational services. He affirmed that the UN-Habitat Award would boost the government's efforts to accomplish more achievements for the Kingdom.

Shaikh Khalifa also lauded the role of the Gulf media and said the media was an essential partner in the development process in all countries.

He affirmed that any achievement by any GCC country was an achievement of all the GCC and Arab countries and it contributed to bolstering the GCC's regional and international status.

Shaikh Khalifa attended a luncheon hosted in his honour by the former Saudi Minister of Oil, Shaikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani. Present were the Saudi Ambassador to Geneva, Abduljabbar Attar, Shaikh Khalifa's delegations and a number of senior officials.