

No crisis between executive and legislative branches in Kuwait

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There is no crisis whatsoever between the executive and legislative branches, both of which are devoted to serving the interests of the Kuwaiti people, said House Speaker Jassem al-Kharafi, in statements he made to reporters on Wednesday.

To substantiate this notion, he cited the landmark achievements made by the National Assembly in its past two legislative terms. He said just because MPs Musallam al-Barrak, Adel al-Saraawi, and Abdullah al-Roomi have asked to have the minister of Oil Ali al-Jarrah step on the podium to be grilled by lawmakers did not mean there was a rift between the executive and legislative branches of government. "Why do you insist there is a crisis or rift where there is none," he asked reporters.

He expressed hope that al-Jarrah's grilling would come to pass in a normal fashion befitting the occasion. Asked whether he had received a request from al-Jarrah asking for explanation of some items on the agenda of the grilling, al-Kharafi said " I have received no such request from the distinguished minister." With regard to reports bandied about on the possibility that the National Assembly might be dissolved, he said this matter was "in the hands of HH the Amir," cautioning that chatter by the press and the public about an imminent dissolution of the Assembly was "inconsequential." Turning to international issues, the House Speaker made it clear that Kuwait rejected the notion of its soil being used in a military strike against any country.

In that he echoed what Defense minister Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak had said yesterday that Kuwait would not allow anyone to use its soil to carry out an attack on someone else. Sheikh Jaber denied that the US had asked to use Kuwaiti soil to launch an attack against Iran.

Al-Kharafi affirmed that with regard to goings-on between Iran and the United States, Kuwait's position was clear in that Kuwait "is not a party" to these goings-on. "Kuwait, in fact, will not be in any way part of any conflict " in the region. Both the Assembly and the government were totally agreed on that, he assured.

Commenting on the US state department report charging Kuwait with human trafficking, he said "I have not read the report but read about it in the local newspapers." He downplayed the significance of the charge saying that the US itself was guilty of unsavory practices such as the detainment of people in Guantanamo. "People who live in glass house should not cast stones at others," he said.

Local papers here had published today a US state department report listing Kuwait among 16 countries guilty of trafficking in human beings.

The report replaced Zimbabwe, Laos, and Beliz on its black list of countries trafficking in humans, with Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar. Thus exposing all of the GCC states, except the UAE, to possible deprivation of US aid.