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## UN Chief calls for phasing out fossil fuels

By Antonio Guterres  
United Nations Secretary-General

Your Highness, President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan,

I want to express my profound gratitude for the wonderful hospitality that we are enjoying in Dubai from the government and the people of the United Arab Emirates.



COP28 President Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, I want to congratulate you on the positive start to the COP with an expeditious approval of the agenda and the landmark operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund.

Excellencies, friends,

Just days ago, I was on the melting ice of Antarctica. Not long before, I was among the melting glaciers of Nepal. These two spots are far in distance, but united in crisis. Polar ice and glaciers are vanishing before our eyes, causing havoc the world over: from landslides and floods, to rising seas. But this is just one symptom of the sickness bringing our climate to its knees. A sickness only you, global leaders, can cure. Excellencies, Earth's vital signs are failing: record emissions, ferocious fires, deadly droughts and the hottest year ever. We are miles from the goals of the Paris Agreement — and minutes to midnight for the 1.5-degree limit.

But it is not too late. You can prevent planetary crash and burn. We have the technologies to avoid the worst of climate chaos, if we act now. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has charted a clear path to a 1.5-degree world. But we need leadership, cooperation, and political will. And we need it now.

Our world is unequal and divided. As we see in this region, conflicts are causing immense suffering and intense emotion. And climate chaos is fanning the flames of injustice. Global heating is busting budgets, ballooning food prices, upending energy markets, and feeding a cost-of-living crisis. Climate action can flip the switch. Renewable energy is the gift that keeps on giving. It is good for our planet, our health, and our economies. Cleaning our air. Meeting the world's growing energy demand. Connecting millions of people to affordable electricity. Bringing stability and security to markets. And saving money; renewable energy has never been cheaper.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



Towards a Brighter Tomorrow:

### India's G20 Presidency and the Dawn of a New Multilateralism

By Narendra Modi  
Prime Minister of India

Today marks 365 days (Thursday Nov 30) since India assumed the G20 Presidency. It is a moment to reflect, recommit, and rejuvenate the spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, 'One Earth, One Family, One Future.'

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# Kenya, Kuwait to strengthen ties in education, health

Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. Halima Mahmoud, highlighted the growing cooperation between Kenya and Kuwait in various sectors, including education and trade.

Speaking during a media interview, the Kenyan envoy noted that Kuwait has generously granted four seats to Kenyan students in Kuwait University's languages department, along with one seat in social sciences. She added that discussions are also underway to establish a memorandum of understanding in the health sector, as there is a rising demand for Kenyan nurses by the Kuwaiti private sector.

Emphasizing the excellent economic cooperation between the two countries, Ambassador Mahmoud pointed out that Kuwait imports over 20 tons of Kenyan sheep meat every month, totaling 240 tons annually. Although live sheep are not currently being imported to Kuwait,

efforts are being made to resume imports by collaborating with private sector companies.

Furthermore, Kuwait imports a variety of agricultural products from Kenya, including flowers, onions, tea, coffee, avocados, mangoes, and pineapples. These imports contribute significantly to Kuwait's food security, with around 130 tons of fruits being imported annually.

Ambassador Mahmoud highlighted that Kenya is an agricultural country with a reputation for safety and tranquility. The country's foreign investment laws are encouraging to investors, making it an attractive destination for Kuwaiti businesses.

She also urged Kuwaiti investors to explore the available opportunities in Kenya's tourism sector, which is a significant source of income for the country. Stressing on the ease of obtaining an online visit visa



through the Kenyan embassy's website, the ambassador clarified that the number of Kuwaiti tourists visiting Kenya has been increasing, with approximately 500 Kuwaitis visiting the country last month alone.

She encouraged Kuwaiti tourists not to miss the opportunity to witness the breathtaking migration of millions of wild animals through Kenyan territory, particularly during the month of June.

Ambassador Mahmoud also highlighted Kenya's remarkable geographical features, including its mountains, volcanic lakes, and the famous Great African Rift. Tourists can enjoy activities such as climbing the snow-covered peaks of Mount Kenya and engaging in trout fishing in clear water streams.

The Masai Mara National Reserve, located on the border with Tanzania, is another popular destination known for its incredible wildlife. Thousands of wildebeest, zebras, and gazelles migrate across the Serengeti Desert, making it a unique wildlife spectacle from May to October.

The strengthening cooperation between Kenya and Kuwait in various sectors showcases the positive diplomatic relations between the two countries. It opens doors for further collaboration and mutual benefits in the years to come, concluded the ambassador.

## BSK co-hosts the BSME Under-19 Games



British School of Kuwait (BSK) co-hosted the British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) Under 19 Games with The English Academy (TEA) on 17 and 18 November. A total of 14 schools from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the UAE took part in the games, with the volleyball and netball tournaments being held at BSK and the football tournaments at the Celtic pitches in Bayan, and the Hasan Abul football field in Dasma.



In the boys' volleyball competition, after impressive displays of athleticism and agility it was St Christopher's School (Bahrain) who came in first, with The British School Al Khubairat (Abu Dhabi) the runners up. After a thrilling play-off for third place between the two host schools, it was BSK who emerged victorious after a hard fought third set win over TEA.

On the netball courts, there were incredible displays of agility and precision as talented

young netball players vied for supremacy. In the end it was Cranleigh Abu Dhabi who emerged victorious, with Kings' School Al Barsha (Dubai) the runners-up and The British School Al Khubairat (Abu Dhabi) coming in third place.

When it came to football, spectators at the pitches witnessed impressive displays of skill, strategy, and teamwork as the aspiring footballers showcased their talents in an electrifying tournament. From precision passes to breathtaking goals, the football tournaments captivated fans and enthusiasts alike. In the boys' event it was The British International School Abu Dhabi who placed first, with Cranleigh Abu Dhabi the runners-up and Park House English School (Qatar) coming in third place. In the girls' tournament, victory went to The British International School of Jeddah, with St Christopher's School (Bahrain) in second place and The British International School Abu Dhabi in third position.

The generous support of sponsors of the event — Al Mulla Exchange, Want IT Buy IT, KDD, National Printing Press, and Kun Kopy — ensured the success of the BSME Under 19 Games. Their commitment to promoting youth sports in the Middle East was duly acknowledged and appreciated.

As a founding member of the British Schools in the Middle East, BSK has a decades-long commitment to the BSME network of British international schools within the region and is a strong advocate of competition, sportsmanship and unity for which these games are renowned. BSK were delighted to be able to share their excellent campus facilities with visiting schools and for the hard work and commitment of their PE Team to help ensure that the Under-19 BSME Games were a memorable and seamless event for everyone involved.

## New US Ambassador to Kuwait takes charge

New US Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Karen Hideko Sasahara arrived in Kuwait last week to head the US Embassy here. The ambassador is expected to submit her credentials to the Foreign Minister over the next few days.

A member of the US Senior Foreign Service, with the rank of Minister-Counselor, Ambassador Sasahara held the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for North Africa. Prior to her appointment to Kuwait,



she was the Chargé d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Jordan, and previous to that the Consul General in Jerusalem. She also served as Senior Advisor to the Office of Intelligence and Research.

She also served on the Board of Examiners of the Diplomatic Corps, Deputy Head of Mission in Sana'a, and Advisor Foreign policy of the Commander-in-Chief of Special Forces in the US Central Operations Command.



## Al Hakimi kiosk now open in City Centre Salmiya!

Al-Hakimi Supermarket for Indian spices, announced the opening of its newest kiosk in the heart of Salmiya at the flagship City Centre store. It offers customers a wide range of products, including foodstuff, Indian spices and Ayurveda herbs at competitive prices.

"We are excited to open our kiosk at City Centre, which is a popular shopping destination for residents and visitors alike that features a modern look and provides customers with a relaxed shopping experience," said Mr. Zoeb Hussain Badri, Founder of Al Hakimi Supermarket. "We believe that our new store will provide customers with quality products at competitive prices, while also offering convenience added co-founder Mr. Burhanuddin Badri.

Mr. Ajay Goel, COO, City Centre added "It's an absolute delight to have Al Hakimi as a part of City Centre, and what better location than our Salmiya store which has undergone a facelift much to the delight of



our customers. City Centre offers a variety of products catering to everyone's needs, right from Fresh produce to Household essentials and more, all under one roof. More so, we have a diverse range of products that are made in Kuwait and a curated Imports range including the Waitrose brand from the UK."

The new kiosk is open from 9 am to 10 pm, seven days a week.







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# Laos, a Paradise of Culture, Nature and History

Ambassador of Laos H.E. Boun Inthabandith

By Reaven D'Souza  
Executive Managing Editor

In a wide ranging media interview last week, Ambassador of Laos H.E. Boun Inthabandith touched on strong and friendly relations between Laos and Kuwait and elaborated on various aspects of bilateral relations between the two countries.

He began by expressing his honor to serve as his country's ambassador to the peaceful nation of Kuwait. He noted that Laos and Kuwait established diplomatic relations on 14 July 2008, and that this year marks the 15th anniversary of successful diplomatic ties between the two nations. He went on to add that the Laotian Embassy was opened in Kuwait City in 2009, while Kuwait opened its embassy

between the two countries such as the official visit by the former Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and his delegation to Vientiane in August of 2008. And in January 2009, the Lao PDR Prime Minister Bouasone Bouphavanh arrived in Kuwait at the invitation of Sheikh Nasser.

"During these two high profile visits a total of 12 agreements and memorandum of understandings (MoU) were signed by the two countries on bilateral cooperation in various fields, including trade, economic and technical cooperation, labor force, agriculture, aviation service, tourism, encouragement and reciprocal protection of investment, avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of tax evasion. A follow-up visit by a Kuwaiti delegation led to the signing of cooperation agreements in civil and

from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plans to pay an official visit to Vientiane to attend the 4th Political Consultations Meeting. "I believe that the visit will contribute to further deepening the friendly relations and very good cooperation between our two countries. In addition, our two national Chamber of Commerce and Industries will meet in Kuwait in the near future and hold discussions on trade and investment cooperation."

Expanding on his tenure in Kuwait, the Laotian envoy stated: "Today, 29 November marks one year anniversary of my credential presentation to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. I am honored to be my country's ambassador to this model country of humanitarian leadership in the region and in the world. The people here are very hospitable, friendly and supportive. Since taking charge, I have worked to strengthen the close and cordial relations between our two countries. The government authorities here are very cooperative and friendly to the diplomatic community and I have also enjoyed my mission in this country."

Turning to bilateral trade, the ambassador indicated that among the various products exported from Laos to Kuwait are paper and other products made from paper, lumber, cassava flour, trees and plants. On the other hand there are no exports from Kuwait to Laos and therefore we are pushing our two sides to discuss more on trade cooperation in the near future. Currently, we have 14 agreements between our two countries which consist of the Trade Agreement and the Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital."

Taking time to outline the history of his country and the significance of his country's national day on 2 December, Ambassador Inthabandith stated: "The official full name of our country is Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) or Laos. Laos is an ancient country, popularly known as 'Land of Million Elephants', the country has a population of 7.5 million people and a land area of 236,800 square kilometers. On 2nd December 2023, we will be celebrating the 48th anniversary of the founding of Lao PDR, which was established after more than four decades of ruinous war and turmoil in the area.

"Since that historical victory day of genuine



national independence, the Laotian people and government have dedicated all their efforts and energy on rebuilding and developing the country. Now, the most important thing for us is to ensure peace and stability, inside the country and with all neighboring countries by continuing to pursue its consistent foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation, which serves as the fundamental foundation for enhancing cooperation with all nations as well as fulfilling our obligations under the international cooperation frameworks so that our economic and social developments can take place and we can maintain economic growth and provide social equity and prosperity for our people.

"Due to Laos being a landlocked country, we have a policy to move our nation from a 'land-locked' into a 'land-lined' country to develop the economy and social conditions. Presently, the Laos-China Railway has finished construction and is being used for transportation. In the next few years, the rail network will be connected to Thailand and Vietnam as well, which will transform Laos into a logistic hub in the region.

"We also aim to attract foreign enterprises to invest in the growth and development of Laos, through creating a favorable investment climate with strong legal frameworks, and by adopting appropriate technology and skills.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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in Vientiane, the capital of Laos in 2012.

Additionally, he said that it was worth pointing out that "our embassy in Kuwait is the only Laotian mission in the Middle East and similarly, the Kuwaiti Embassy in Laos is the only one from the Middle East region." The ambassador also stressed that the embassy in Kuwait was receiving full support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies, which further enhanced relations between Laos and Kuwait.

"Since establishment of diplomatic relations, there have been high-level exchange visits

aviation matters and in the areas of electricity generation, agriculture and petroleum.

"The Kuwait Fund has also provided loans for two projects in Laos, one for the electricity transmission network and the other for an irrigation project, both of which have helped to develop the infrastructure and economy of the country. It is also worth noting that our two countries have a very good relation in diplomatic and political affairs as well as in supporting each other at regional and international fora."

He also disclosed that a Kuwaiti delegation

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# Bangladesh Embassy celebrates Armed Forces Day



**D**efense Wing of the Embassy of Bangladesh organized a reception to commemorate the 52nd Anniversary of 'Armed Forces Day' of Bangladesh. The event took place on 27 November at the Al Taj Ballroom of Hotel Millennium, where esteemed guests from various countries, diplomatic services and civil societies of Kuwait, and members of the Bangladesh community gathered to celebrate.

The reception commenced with Brigadier General Md Hasan Uz Zaman, Defence Attache of Bangladesh in Kuwait, delivering the welcome speech. He expressed gratitude to the esteemed attendees and, in particular, acknowledged the presence of the Guest of Honor, Brigadier General Lafi Malfi Almutari, director of Junior Commissioned Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Affairs Branch of the Kuwait Armed Forces, representing the Chief of Staff of the Kuwait Armed Forces.

Brigadier General Zaman emphasized

the significance of Armed Forces Day, stating that it not only holds importance for the members of Bangladesh Armed Forces but also for the entire nation. He paid tribute to the war heroes and martyrs who sacrificed their lives for Bangladesh's freedom and highlighted the importance of collaboration among armed forces to combat common enemies.

Brigadier General Zaman also discussed the modernization efforts of Bangladesh Armed Forces under the 'Forces Goal-2030' program, highlighting their commitment to maintaining peace globally and their contributions in nation-building activities, disaster management, and internal security duties.

Speaking at the event, the Ambassador of Bangladesh, Major General Md Ashikuzzaman, expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti government on the occasion of the 52nd Armed Forces Day of Bangladesh.

He emphasized the strong bond between Kuwait and Bangladesh, particularly in the military sector, and praised the contributions of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and the brave soldiers during the War of Independence. The Ambassador expressed his hopes for further strengthening the harmonious relations between the two friendly nations.

Guest of Honour, Brigadier General Almutari, commended the contributions of the Bangladesh Military Contingent to Kuwait and expressed his desire for enhanced engagement in the defense

sector between the two countries in the future.

The event also saw messages of congratulations and well wishes from the Honorable President and Honorable Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as well as from the Chief of Bangladesh Army, Navy, and Air Force, recognizing the valuable contributions of the armed forces.

With hopes for ongoing progress and development, the celebration marked a significant milestone in the Kuwait-Bangladesh relationship.



## Romanian Embassy organizes 'Discover Romania' promotion

**R**omanian Embassy in coordination with the Romanian Spotlynx Company hosted a tourism event last week titled 'Discover Romania' to showcase the unique splendors of Romania. In a statement on the occasion, Romanian Ambassador H.E. Mugurel Stanescu expressed his gratitude to all the attendees and urged more Kuwaitis to visit and see for themselves the delightful tourism venues and activities in Romania.

In addition to representatives from travel agencies in Kuwait, high-profile figures attending the event included Mariam

Al Kandari, vice-president of the Kuwait Traveller Association, and renowned travel influencer, Noura Khan.

The highlight of the event was the captivating presentation that provided the attendees with comprehensive insights into the hidden gems of Romania. The guests were astounded to discover enchanting destinations such as Dracula's Castle, the Salt Mines, the splendor of Danube Delta, the rejuvenating Balneotherapy treatments available in Romania, and many other extraordinary places that could be explored during a trip to Romania.

## PAM outlines stipulations on dismissal of employees

**I**n a communique on its website the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) outlined the legal stipulations under which an employer is permitted to dismiss an employee without the need for a notice-period, compensations, or indemnity.

The communique was issued by PAM as part of its initiative to inform the public on labor law provisions concerning employers and employees. PAM made clear the specific situations in which an employer can legally dismiss an employee without compensation. These include:

- Instances where an employee's mistake results in significant losses for the employer.
- Situations where it is substantiated that the employee secured the position through fraudulent or deceptive means.
- Cases where the employee discloses establishment secrets, leading to actual or potential substantial losses. In addition, employers are granted the right to terminate employment under the following circumstances:
  - Conviction of the employee for a crime against honor, trustworthiness, or morals.
  - Engagement in conduct within the workplace that violates public morals.
  - Commission of assault against a colleague, employer, or representative during or as a result of work-related activities.
  - Violation or non-compliance with obligations outlined in the employment contract and legal provisions, especially in instances where the employee recurrently disobeys the employer's directives.



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# Gender gap in salary among the widest in Kuwait

Official statistics from the National Center for Development (NCD), affiliated with the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, highlighted the wide gender gap that exists in salaries between women and men in Kuwait. The data, made available last week, reiterated what local gender activists and international institutions such as the World Economic Forum (WEF) have long maintained.

Official figures from the NCD indicate a 30 percent disparity in salaries between male and female workers in the government sector. The report, based on June 2022 data from the labor market system, reveals that the average monthly wage for Kuwaiti women in the government sector stands at approximately KD1,327, compared to KD1,895 for their male counterparts.

Kuwait 101 Nights celebrations

## Mega Festival for Tourism & Entertainment in Jan



Preparations are in full swing for Kuwait Festival for Tourism and Entertainment due in January as part of Kuwait's vision to become a financial, economic and cultural hub, several concepts come to the surface, aiming at boosting non-oil revenues, given the paramount significance of tourism.

The festival to be held under the slogan "Kuwait: One Hundred and One Nights, is chiefly intended to transform Kuwait into a distinctive financial, economic, and cultural center. The country's tourism sector should be developed and promoted with a view to raising its revenues that could contribute to bolstering the national economy and boosting Kuwait's non-oil resources. Comparatively, the real estate sector, with all its various domains and infrastructure as a whole, has an integrated connection with the tourism sector, thus serving an all-out vision meant to transfer Kuwait into a touristic destination by means of roping in Gulf tourists.

The organizers rely upon well-trained young Kuwaitis to organize such festivals and events through offering governmental services and cultural tours, and holding sports activities and exhibitions in a way that would prop up tourism in the country.

Kuwait abounds in fully equipped venues for hosting touristic activities, including parks, cultural and sports centers, museums and utilities. In this regard, Chairman of the Union Real Estate Company Ibrahim Al-Awadhi, speaking to KUNA, said tourism is closely connected with the real estate market, and that's why they absolutely affect each other.

Tourism is also linked to services bearing on property activities that offer services pertinent to the tourism sector such as hotels and hotel apartments, he said. Growing touristic activities and festivals would unquestionably lead to drawing tourists and visitors to Kuwait, given that tourism contributes to promoting the commercial sector, Al-Awadhi pointed out.

He underlined that any State approach to reactivate a specific sector would certainly lead to promoting the property, entertainment and touristic sectors. No but, once the sectors of tourism and entertainment is developed, local companies would seek to create job opportunities, innovative visions, products and projects, especially as the tourism sector has really become a very big source of revenues for neighboring countries, he opined.

This approach, undoubtedly, would result in boosting the gross domestic product (GDP) and easing reliance upon oil earnings for these countries, Al-Awadhi added. For his part, Chairman of the Touristic Property Committee of the Kuwait Festival Association Hani Al-Seddi, speaking to KUNA, underscored the significance of spotlighting the role of touristic properties and tourism industry in general, since this would help in diversifying the country's income sources and raising non-oil revenues.

He regarded this being as one of the most important aspects of the first edition of the Kuwait Festival for Tourism and Entertainment due in January 2024. He added that there is a close and positive relationship between investment in touristic real estate and the touristic environment as a whole as touristic properties play a significant and crucial role in flourishing tourism in Kuwait, just like other world countries.

Properties have clear-cut and tangible influence in the overall future dimensions on the way to making a local tourism industry and building a developed and prosperous economy, based on a distinctive vision of Kuwait's touristic roadmap in line with the New Kuwait 2024 Vision, he noted.

Furthermore, real estate contributes to boosting rental returns thanks to growing demand and landlords' ability to capitalize on relevant opportunities to rent their facilities at higher prices during the touristic season, he said. However, Al-Seddi emphasized that environmental suitability would lead to sustainable real estate, and that traditional properties could face challenges in answering mounting environment needs.

Investment in touristic real estate is deemed to be a common option for investors to notch up great profits, with the availability of a various set of investment opportunities, he pointed out.

The World Economic Forum's global gender gap report on Kuwait notes a significant widening of the wage gap during the periods 2006-2010 and 2012-2022, with marginal improvements in 2012, 2020, and 2021. Overall, the average percentage of equal wages for similar work between men and women is 67 percent in Kuwait, which is a 7 percent decline from 2006 to 2023.

The report emphasizes that the salary gap is not rooted in the fundamental salary structure based on job grades and qualifications but is evident in other benefits men receive, such as social allowances, promotions, and additional perks.

Examining annual incomes, the average annual income for females in Kuwait is \$25,597, compared to \$53,640 for males, resulting in a 52 percent difference in favor of males over the period 2006-2022.

Kuwait's global ranking in the overall Global Gender Gap Index published by the WEF has declined by 34 places since the index's inception in 2006. The decline has mainly been in economic participation and opportunities, where it dropped by 46 places.

The summary of Kuwait's performance in the index from 2006 to 2023 shows that the country fell by 46 places in the field of economic participation and opportunities; in the field of academic achievement the decline was 10 places; and in political empowerment, the country declined by 23 places. However, in the field of health and survival, Kuwait advanced by 18 spots.

The WEF report on gender gap, which has now been confirmed by the NCD, underscores the need for concerted efforts to address and rectify gender disparities in various domains in Kuwait.



The analysis of Kuwait's standing, encompassing various fields and sub-indices, indicates a notable decline in the economic participation and opportunities sector. Since the inception of the index in 2006, Kuwait has experienced a significant drop of 46 places in this domain.

Notably, its most favorable performance occurred in 2020, achieving a score of 0.589 out of 1,000, signifying an average gender gap in this particular area. In 2023, Kuwait's ranking reflects a downturn across most sub-indices related to economic participation and opportunities.

However, there is a noteworthy improvement in the "percentage of equal wages between women and men for similar work" index, where Kuwait advanced by four places compared to the previous year.

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# CMU-Q woos students from Kuwait

By Sheikha Suhaila Fahad Al-Sabah  
Managing Editor

Kuwait is a priority market for universities, revealed Jonathan Dudley, assistant director of admissions at the Carnegie Mellon University (CMU-Q) campus in Qatar during his recent visit to Kuwait.

Speaking to The Times Kuwait during his visit, Mr. Dudley pointed out that he had visited six schools in Kuwait to support students who would like to apply to one of CMU-Q undergraduate programs and guide them through the admission process.

Appreciating the response from students in Kuwait, he noted that as one of the top universities in the United States, students have the opportunity to learn from a top-class US university while enjoying the convenience of studying at the Qatar campus which is just one and half hour away from home.

CMU-Q is offering students four programs to choose from — computer science,



informatic systems, biological sciences and business administration. These options were found to be very appealing for students in the region. Moreover, an added advantage to the programs at CMU-Q is that students can transfer to the US campus after the sec-

ond year, if they wish to continue their course in the US for the total four-year course.

Noting that admission to CMU-Q is open to any student in the country, he pointed out that the campus has around 500 students from more than 60 different nations, making the campus a very diverse and enriching environment for learning and growing. He added that the student to faculty ratio was 7 to 1 making each course very personalized, with only about 15 students to a class. He further revealed that financial aid is available for non-Kuwaiti students based on their need for financial support.

While Carnegie Mellon has several courses and is rated among the top universities, Mr. Dudley stressed that the four programs at CMU-Q were selected based on the national vision of the countries in the region.

For more than a century, Carnegie Mellon University has challenged the curious and

passionate to imagine and deliver work that matters. A private, top-ranked and global university, Carnegie Mellon sets its own course with programs that inspire creativity and collaboration.

In 2004, Carnegie Mellon and Qatar Foundation began a partnership to deliver select programs that will contribute to the long-term development of Qatar.

Today, Carnegie Mellon Qatar offers undergraduate programs in biological sciences, business administration, computer science, and information systems. More than 470 students from 61 countries call Carnegie Mellon Qatar home.

Graduates from CMU-Q are pursuing their careers in top organizations within Qatar and around the world, and many have started their own entrepreneurial ventures. With 16 graduating classes, the total number of alumni is more than 1200.



## Diplomatic Corps bids farewell to Italian ambassador



Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E. Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda, with participation of the representatives of diplomatic missions and International organizations in Kuwait, bid fond farewell to the Ambassador of the Republic of

Italy H.E. Carlo Baldocci who completed his tenure in Kuwait. On behalf of the diplomatic corps Ambassador Zubaydzoda presented Ambassador Baldocci with a memento and wished him well-being, prosperity, and best of luck in his future endeavors.

## ILOA holds annual prize distribution ceremony



Indian Learners' Own Academy (ILOA) hosted the annual Prize Distribution Ceremony for classes 6 to 12 on 23 November at the school auditorium. Esteemed personalities attending the event included the chief guest Country Manager of IDP Education, Sujatha Vora, the school Chairman D.K. Sharma, and Principal Asha Sharma, along with the awardees, their proud parents, and teachers. The attendees symbolized the collective efforts behind the ILOA achievements.

Inaaya Sajid and Silvan Miracle, both charismatic Class 11 students, took the center stage as the hosts, infusing the event with energy and charm. Following prayers beseeching the Almighty's blessings and the playing of the national anthems of Kuwait and India, the lighting of the traditional lamp — a signature ritual that symbolizes the pursuit of knowledge and enlightenment in every ILOA function — was held. The school choir then rendered the institution's anthem, following which, Vice Principal Jaseela Naufal delivered a warm welcome to the audience and introduced the chief guest. Principal Mrs. Sharma then presented the Annual School Report, a comprehensive account of the institution's achievements. The outstanding board results,

triumphs in international Olympiads, and the array of seminars conducted for and by both teachers and students were highlighted in the report, showcasing ILOA's commitment to holistic education.

In her inspirational address, Mrs. Vora encouraged the students to strive for the best version of themselves. The highlight of the ceremony was the prize distribution, where students from Class 12 and 10 who secured top positions in the Board Exams 2022-23, subject toppers, and those with above 90 percent aggregate were honored. The auditorium erupted in applause as these bright minds were recognized for their hard work and dedication.

The felicitation of teachers and long-serving educators was followed by, acknowledging centum students and the most punctual ones. The spotlight then shifted to sports achievements, with the recognition of winners from CBSE athletics and clusters meet. Special acknowledgement was given to the volleyball team for reaching nationals and triumphing over the Gujarat team. Class 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11 students who excelled as scholars, all-rounders, and in various Olympiads were then awarded, showcasing the breadth of talent within the school.

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# Kuwait reiterates commitment to climate goals

The world is convening at the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at the Dubai Expo City in the UAE. The conference, which began on 30 November and runs to 12 December, is the primary decision-making body of the UNFCCC with representatives of 198 countries who are parties to the Framework Convention participating in the global climate gathering with the aim of addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is heading Kuwait's delegation to the two-day World Climate Action Summit (WCAS), attended by leaders of countries around the world. Speaking to media at Kuwait's pavilion in Dubai Expo City, Sheikh Salem said Kuwait has clear commitments in reaching carbon neutrality in the oil sector by 2050 and all sectors of the State by 2060. "We are moving to achieve these goals and we are on the right track," the Kuwaiti top diplomat noted.

In his address to the WCAS on 1 December, Sheikh Salem reiterated that Kuwait lends utmost significance to climate change on a State level. Stressing the country's involvement in global efforts to limit impacts of climate change, the Kuwaiti top diplomat pointed to programs and plans put in action to

address the environmental matter, including low-carbon emission strategies in oil, transportation, industrial and agricultural sectors.

He told the gathering that such plans aim at achieving sustainable growth through a circular carbon economy. Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah also highlighted Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development's (KFAED) role in this regard, noting that 105 countries have benefited from a total of USD 23 billion in developmental projects, including \$523 million for green energy in the last 10 years. He added that Kuwait has also joined the One Planet Sovereign Wealth Fund Working Group in 2017, represented by the State's Investment Authority.

He further disclosed that Kuwait will soon present its plan, in implementation of the Paris Agreement, especially paragraph 19 of Article 4 stipulating Parties to strive to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies. Kuwait has clear commitments in reaching carbon neutrality in the oil sector by 2050 and on a State level by 2060, Sheikh Salem concluded.

Kuwait has been reiterating commitment to the international agreements to cut gas emissions to build a system capable of addressing future challenges. The country is also moving forward to achieving its New Kuwait Vision by ensuring that 15 percent of local electricity is sourced from renewable energy by 2030, said Kuwait's Minister of Electric, Water and Renewable Energy Jassem Al-Ostad

while attending COP28. He affirmed that His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, has given clear directives to construct renewable energy stations in order to provide clean and affordable energy, as well as to honor Kuwait's commitments to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 on the other hand.

He added that Kuwait will face power shortages in the coming years so the planned approach is to invite corporations or consortiums to establish clean energy stations through the Independent Power Provider (IPP) pathway, adding that these companies would be building solar energy stations that provide clean and affordable electricity.

Underscoring the energy minister's message, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil Nimer Al-Malek Al-Sabah stressed the importance of Kuwait's participation in COP28 and other ministerial meetings, so as to deliver a clear message on the country's commitment to protecting the climate and tackling related important issues. He expressed aspiration for fruitful valuable discussions in the conference to enhance efforts to reduce emissions from the current energy system and cooperate to build a system capable of keeping pace with future requirements and challenges.

For his part, Acting Director General of KFAED, Waleed Al-Bahar, said that the Fund was eager to bolster cooperation with regional and international entities within the environmental level through various part-



nerships and agreements so as to lessen the impact on climate. He added that Kuwait also remains committed to safeguarding the environment and the New Kuwait development plan includes strategies to utilize sustainable elements as a base for development.

Climate change increases social and economic inequality in terms of endangering lives, or causing loss of resources and increasing poverty.

In March 2023, IPCC, the leading authority in climate science, confirmed that global temperatures were rising to record levels, warning of the consequences of countries not taking adequate measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The panel urged countries to reduce emissions, cut fossil fuel production, stop deforestation, and expand the scope of renewable energy.

## Resumption of visas could see OFWs arrive by 1Q24

A delegation from the Philippine Ministry of Labor is expected to visit Kuwait in December to hold talks with relevant authorities on the resumption of sending Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) to Kuwait.

Meanwhile, the Migrant Workers Administration at the Philippines Ministry of Labor, and the Association of Secretaries

of Employment Agencies in Manila, are reportedly holding broad discussions with the Kuwaiti side to break the current stalemate between the two countries and resume a joint dialogue, so that a consensus can be reached to end the existing labor dispute.

Since the ban imposed by the Kuwaiti side on bringing in Filipino workers since last May has been lifted, Bassam Al-Shammari, a specialist in domestic worker affairs, said that if the bilateral efforts currently underway succeed in resolving the labor disputes between the two sides, OFWs could begin arriving in Kuwait in the first-quarter of 2024 (1Q24).

He noted that the number of Filipino



domestic workers employed in Kuwait is estimated to be around 200,000, accounting for nearly 50 percent of the total number of female household workers in the country.

"This confirms the demand for Filipina workers among most Kuwaiti and expatriate families who prefer the services of this category of workers because of several reasons, including ease of communication, good educational level, and knowledge of the customs and traditions of society."

Al-Shammari added, "We expect that once the crisis is resolved, thousands of new Filipino workers will enter the Kuwaiti market, especially in light of the severe shortage of these workers ever since the decision to stop issuing new visas to Filipinos, as well as the refusal of many workers to renew their contract on expiry of their two-year contract period."



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# Justice for Climate Migrants



**Sameh Shoukry and Amy E. Pope**

Sameh Shoukry is COP27 President and Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Amy E. Pope is Director-General of the International Organization for Migration.

In recent years, climate change has emerged as one of the leading drivers of migration. Shifting weather patterns, together with the growing severity and frequency of extreme weather events, have affected millions of people around the world, posing a significant threat to their lives and livelihoods.

In March, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its sixth assessment report (AR6), revealing that for every additional 1° Celsius rise in global temperatures, the risk of involuntary displacement due to flooding is expected to increase by roughly 50 percent.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America, slow-onset climate disasters such as water stress, crop failure, and rising sea levels could displace 31-72 million people by 2050 under a low-warming scenario. In a high-warming scenario, the number of displaced people could surge to 90-143 million. In Sub-Saharan Africa, flood-related displacement could rise by 200-600% by the 2070s, depending on the rate of population growth and anticipated temperature increases ranging from 1.6°C to 2.6°C.

While the Global South is disproportionately affected by the catastrophic effects of climate change, no part of the world is immune. The climate crisis will have far-reaching implications for global stability, security, and sustainable development, affecting not only migrants' countries of origin but also transit and destination countries.

The COP27 Presidency and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are committed to addressing the challenge of climate-induced migration with the goal of fostering a more just and equitable world. Over the past year, we have collaborated with governments, civil-society organizations, other UN agencies, and various stakeholders to develop and promote sustainable approaches to climate-related mobility, including displacement.

enabling governments to improve living standards and maintain peace in the face of climate-related threats. We have actively promoted these initiatives in various formal and informal forums, including the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

For sure, there is still much work to be done. To address the urgent threat posed by climate change, the international community must support adaptation efforts, particularly in the Global South.

Strengthening resilience is crucial to empowering populations to make informed decisions about whether to relocate or remain where they are. Achieving this, however, requires immediate and substantial financing for adaptation initiatives, including the much-anticipated Loss and Damage Fund for

supporting the implementation of effective initiatives and the integration of migrants' perspectives and experiences into decision-making processes.

Climate change often exacerbates existing challenges and vulnerabilities, forcing communities to confront compounding crises. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize and address these underlying factors, including conflict, poverty, and inequality. To this end, we must adopt a holistic approach that promotes peace and security, reduces poverty and inequality, and fosters sustainable development.

Displacement is a complex and daunting challenge that requires a comprehensive, coordinated, and forward-looking response. By enhancing international cooperation, we could significantly improve the lives and livelihoods of those displaced by climate disasters and develop sustainable solutions that enable them to rebuild and contribute to their communities' development. This approach is not only the right thing to do; it is also a crucial step toward building a more peaceful, just, and sustainable future for everyone.

The stakes of the current climate crisis are, or should be, obvious. The Mediterranean region, in particular, is no stranger to devastating environmental changes, as historical evidence suggests that extreme weather events may have triggered mass displacement and led to the downfall of great civilizations during what is now known as the Late Bronze Age Collapse.

To address climate-related displacement effectively, we must first understand and acknowledge the scale and complexity of the challenge. Only then will we recognize the need to engage all relevant stakeholders to develop proactive and sustainable solutions, avert the catastrophic effects of climate change, and build a world that is both prosperous and just.

“

The climate crisis will have far-reaching implications for global stability, security, and sustainable development, affecting not only migrants' countries of origin but also transit and destination countries.

”

To reduce the adverse effects of climate change that compel migrants to leave their countries of origin, we advocate the full implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. With the support of the IOM, the COP27 Presidency has highlighted Egyptian programs like the Climate Responses for Sustaining Peace and the Decent Life Initiative as models that could be replicated worldwide. Taken together, these initiatives offer a roadmap for sustainable development,

developing countries announced at COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh. Other crucial steps include ensuring the complementarity and accessibility of climate-funding instruments and incorporating human-mobility considerations into climate negotiations.

As we approach COP28, we must focus on climate-related migration and displacement and develop concrete solutions that promote the safety and well-being of affected communities and individuals. This involves





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# COP28 Opens with Aim to Accelerate Action, Raise Ambition

United Nations Climate Change Conference COP28 opened at the expansive Expo City in Dubai on 30 November with the aim of accelerating collective climate action and raising ambition to meet climate goals.

The conference, which runs from 30 November to 12 December, is taking place in a year that has gone down as the hottest ever recorded in human history, and as the impacts of the climate crisis wreak unprecedented havoc on human life and livelihoods around the world.

COP28 is a decisive moment to act on climate commitments and prevent the worst impacts of climate change. This year's COP marks the conclusion of the 'global stocktake' (GST), the first assessment of global progress in implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement. The findings of the GST are stark: the world is not on track to limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C by the end of this century. It does recognize that countries are developing plans for a net-zero future, and the shift to clean energy is gathering speed, but it makes clear that the transition is nowhere near fast enough yet to limit warming within the current ambitions.

A report recently published by UN Climate Change shows that national climate action plans (known as nationally determined contributions, or 'NDCs') would collectively lower greenhouse gas emissions to 2 percent below 2019 levels by 2030, while the science is clear that a 43 percent reduction is needed.

The global stocktake must be a catalyst for greater ambition in meeting the Paris Agreement's goals as nations prepare to submit revised national climate action plans by 2025. It lays out actions on how to accelerate emissions cuts, strengthen resilience to climate impacts, and provide the support and finance needed for the transformation.

"Over 160 world leaders are headed to Dubai, because only cooperation between nations



“Progress on climate finance at COP28 will be crucial to build trust in other negotiation areas and to lay the groundwork for an even more ambitious “New Collective Quantified Goal” for climate finance, which must be in place next year.”

can get humanity back in this race. But COP28 cannot be just a photo-op. Leaders must deliver; the message is clear,” said UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell. “And as leaders leave Dubai after the opening summit, their message to their negotiators must be equally

clear: don't come home without a deal that will make a real difference.” Climate finance stands at the heart of this transformation. Replenishing the Green Climate Fund, doubling financial resources for adaptation and operationalizing the loss and damage fund are key to keeping

1.5°C within reach while leaving no one behind.

“The reality is that without much more finance flowing to developing countries, a renewables revolution will remain a mirage in the desert. COP28 must turn it into a reality,” Stiell added. Progress on climate finance at COP28 will be crucial to build trust in other negotiation areas and to lay the groundwork for an even more ambitious “New Collective Quantified Goal” for climate finance, which must be in place next year. It will also set the stage for a just and inclusive transition to renewable energy and the phasing out of fossil fuels.

In the face of rising conflicts and tensions worldwide, Stiell emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to combat climate change, an area in which nations can work together effectively to ensure a sustainable future both for people and the planet.

“We don't have any time to waste. We need to take urgent action now to reduce emissions. At COP28, every country and every company will be held to account, guided by the North Star of keeping 1.5°C within reach,” said COP28 President Dr. Sultan Al Jaber. He added, “All parties should be prepared to deliver a high ambition decision in response to the global stocktake that reduces emissions while protecting people, lives and livelihoods.”

Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs and COP27 President Sameh Shoukry said: “It is of crucial importance to continue building on previous achievements, but more importantly to implement what we already agreed upon. We cannot achieve our common goals without having everyone on board, most importantly the Global South. We need to start delivering on climate justice and provide the needed tools that we already agreed upon in Sharm el-Sheikh for funding loss and damage, including the establishment of a fund. One of the major outcomes that has to come out of COP28 is for the fund to be fully operationalized and funded.”

## India's G20 Presidency and the Dawn of a New Multilateralism

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

As we undertook this responsibility last year, the global landscape grappled with multifaceted challenges: recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, looming climate threats, financial instability, and debt distress in developing nations, all amid declining multilateralism. In the midst of conflicts and competition, development cooperation suffered, impeding progress.

Assuming the G20 Chair, India sought to offer the world an alternative to status quo, a shift from a GDP-centric to human-centric progress. India aimed to remind the world of what unites us, rather than what divides us. Finally, the global conversation had to evolve - the interests of the few had to give way to the aspirations of the many. This required a fundamental reform of multilateralism as we knew it.

Inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, and decisive—these four words defined our approach as G20 president, and the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration (NDLD), unanimously adopted by all G20 members, is testimony to our commitment to deliver on these principles.

Inclusivity has been at the heart of our presidency. The inclusion of the African Union (AU) as a permanent member of the G20 integrated 55 African nations into the forum, expanding it to encompass 80% of the global population. This proactive stance has fostered a more comprehensive dialogue on global challenges and opportunities.

The first-of-its-kind 'Voice of the Global South Summit,' convened by India in two editions,

heralded a new dawn of multilateralism. India mainstreamed the Global South's concerns in international discourse and has ushered in an era where developing countries take their rightful place in shaping the global narrative.

Inclusivity also infused India's domestic approach to G20, making it a People's Presidency that befits that world's largest democracy. Through “Jan Bhagidari” (people's participation) events, G20 reached 1.4 billion citizens, involving all states and Union Territories (UTs) as partners. And on substantive elements, India ensured that international attention was directed to broader developmental aims, aligning with G20's mandate.

At the critical midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, India delivered the G20 2023 Action Plan to Accelerate Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), taking a cross-cutting, action-oriented approach to interconnected issues, including health, education, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

A key area driving this progress is robust Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). Here, India was decisive in its recommendations, having witnessed the revolutionary impact of digital innovations like Aadhaar, UPI, and Digilocker first-hand. Through G20, we successfully completed the Digital Public Infrastructure Repository, a significant stride in global technological collaboration. This repository, featuring over 50 DPIs from 16 countries, will help the Global South build, adopt, and scale DPI to unlock the power of inclusive growth.

For our One Earth, we introduced ambitious and inclusive aims to create urgent, lasting, and equitable change. The Declaration's 'Green Development Pact' addresses the challenges of choosing between combating hunger and protecting the planet, by outlining a comprehensive roadmap where employment and ecosystems are complementary, consumption is climate conscious, and production is planet-friendly. In tandem, the G20 Declaration calls for an ambitious tripling of global renewable energy capacity by 2030. Coupled with the establishment of the Global Biofuels Alliance and a concerted push for Green Hydrogen, the G20's ambitions to build a cleaner, greener world is undeniable. This has always been India's ethos, and through Lifestyles for Sustainable Development (LiFE), the world can benefit from our age-old sustainable traditions.

Further, the Declaration underscores our commitment to climate justice and equity, urging substantial financial and technological support from the Global North. For the first time, there was a recognition of the quantum jump needed in the magnitude of development financing, moving from billions to trillions of dollars. G20 acknowledged that developing countries require \$5.9 trillion to fulfil their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2030.

Given the monumental resources required, G20 emphasized the importance of better, larger, and more effective Multilateral Development Banks. Concurrently, India is taking a leading role in UN reforms, especially

in the restructuring of principal organs like the UN Security Council, that will ensure a more equitable global order.

Gender equality took centre stage in the Declaration, culminating in the formation of a dedicated Working Group on the Empowerment of Women next year. India's Women's Reservation Bill 2023, reserving one-third of India's Parliament and state legislative assembly seats for women epitomizes our commitment to women-led development.

The New Delhi Declaration embodies a renewed spirit of collaboration across these key priorities, focusing on policy coherence, reliable trade, and ambitious climate action. It is a matter of pride that during our Presidency, G20 achieved 87 outcomes and 118 adopted documents, a marked rise from the past.

During our G20 Presidency, India led deliberations on geopolitical issues and their impact on economic growth and development. Terrorism and the senseless killing of civilians is unacceptable, and we must address it with a policy of zero-tolerance. We must embody humanitarianism over hostility and reiterate that this is not an era of war.

I am delighted that during our Presidency India achieved the extraordinary: it revitalised multilateralism, amplified the voice of the Global South, championed development, and fought for the empowerment of women, everywhere.

As we hand over the G20 Presidency to Brazil, we do so with the conviction that our collective steps for people, planet, peace, and prosperity, will resonate for years to come.





# Expo City Dubai, where COP28 evolves over next two weeks



As the United Arab Emirates prepares to host the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the venue of focus will be Expo City Dubai.

A state-of-the-art destination built to promote sustainability and circularity principles, the venue's size and design enables COP28 UAE to serve as an inclusive platform for dialogue, by offering a dedicated space to the accredited parties and observer delegates site (Blue Zone) and to civil society (Green Zone).

**Expo City Dubai Pavilion:** Aimed at catalyzing awareness, agency, and action; connecting people and ideas, and inspiring everyday individuals, the pavilion enables everyone to make a positive difference to the environment and to society itself. The pavilion features a plethora of events, exhibitions and actions that enable all visitors to be participants in the climate change fight.

**Events:** More than a 100 events are planned at the pavilion for all audiences and ages. These events will seek to break through existing echo chambers, connecting world leaders, experts and changemakers from all cultures and communities and sparking new and outcomes-led approaches to driving climate action.

**Exhibitions:** Future of our world rests significantly on the actions of cities today. The exhibitions at the pavilion allow visitors to embark on a journey where they live, work and play as part of a community making leaps forward that are innovative, scalable and transferable — and that will empower other cities around the world not just to survive, but to withstand and thrive.

**Take Action:** Pledge for People and Planet is an opportunity for every one of us to make a positive difference through climate action. This is also the first Arabic-language platform to apply meaningful steps and solutions to individual everyday choices, from the food we buy and eat to how we reuse and recycle. Available in Arabic and English, it is your opportunity to join a global movement to save carbon emissions and protect the future of people and the planet.

In addition to events and programs at the venue, COP28 Presidency is planning a set of thematic programs across the two weeks of COP28. The events are a product of guidance from a diverse set of stakeholders on the outcomes they would like to see under each thematic day, also reflecting inputs from the open consultation process earlier this year.

**Counting On A Sustainable Future:** A global conference on gender and environment will be held on 28-29 November and as part of existing global efforts to understand gender-environment nexus, the Offices of the President of the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP 28) and the UN Climate Change High Level Champions, UNFCCC, UN Women, IUCN, and WEDO will convene a global conference on gender and environment data. Speakers and participants will include UN Agencies, government officials and policy makers,

leaders and commitment makers of the Feminist Action for Climate Justice Action Coalition and the Gender Environment Data Alliance (GEDA), private foundations, civil society organizations, indigenous leaders and local communities and academia.

**Student Energy Summit:** Taking place in Abu Dhabi and Dubai on 1 December, Student Energy Summit 2023 will be the world's largest youth-led energy event, providing a transformative space for young people to collaborate on energy solutions with industry leaders.

SES will bring together 650+ young people and energy sector leaders from over 150 countries to the United Arab Emirates for a collaborative, multidisciplinary forum. The event will be hosted by New York University Abu Dhabi, in collaboration with Student Energy, a global youth-led organization working with a network of 50,000 young people from over 120 countries, alongside the headline sponsor for this year's event, the Bezos Earth Fund, the largest individual philanthropic commitment made to fight climate change and protect nature.

SES is hosted biannually in a new city around the globe. At the margins of COP28, SES will be coming to the Middle East for the first time, highlighting the success story and vision of the UAE's energy transition. The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is the partner to the event.

**Leaders' Event:** Transforming Climate Finance: The Finance Event on 1 December at the World Climate Action Summit (WCAS) will bring together countries and financial leaders to outline proposals for a climate finance system of the future. The event will set out a new vision for an overarching structure and set of organizing principles for a more equitable, scalable, and inclusive international climate finance architecture.

Emphasis will be given to the need to rebuild trust by ramping up public support, particularly for the most vulnerable, while scaling capital in emerging and developing countries, as well as breakthrough innovations, partnerships, policy incentives, and transformative instruments to unlock the potential of the private sector.

**Leaders' Event: Transforming food systems:** The event on 1 December will reiterate what the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessments have identified — action on agriculture and food systems is key to an effective global climate change response. This event will bring the global food community together in a unified expression of collective action.

Anchored by the Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action, producers, governments, companies, financial actors, and non-state leaders will convene to make new commitments that raise the bar for global ambition and action on food systems transformation.

**Terra:** The Sustainability Pavilion The future of our planet hangs in the balance — here is where

you come in. When did you last examine your relationship with nature? Go on an immersive journey through the forest's roots and the ocean's depths to explore the impact humanity's choices are having on the environment and gain skills to protect and preserve our planet for generations to come. This engaging, playful and reflective experience is designed to take visitors of all ages, particularly children, on an emotional journey to understand their impact on the environment and empower them to build a brighter future.

**Terra — The Sustainability Pavilion** is LEED Platinum Certified and designed to be Net Zero in Energy and Water. The building's iconic architecture includes a canopy that is 120-meter-wide and 18 Energy Trees which help generate 4GWh of alternative energy per year.

**Expo City Farm:** Join the Expo City Farm and see how we are making our city green and fertile. Experience sustainable agriculture, nutrition without chemicals, food security without greenhouse gas emissions, growing as a community. See organic farming in action. Find out about the ability of soil to remove CO2 from the atmosphere in the fight against climate change. Witness indoor farming, irrigation water from the air, and other technological innovations.

And when you are hungry you can relax and take some naturally-grown food from our plant-rich farm café. Or if you are interested in nutritious cuisine, sign up for a cooking class with one of our sustainability-inspired chefs. For those interested in taking a deeper dive into regenerative farming, events are being scheduled on soil carbon storage, crop nutrition and the key role sustainable agriculture plays in averting biodiversity loss.

## WE NEED TO ACT ON CLIMATE CHANGE, NOW

Scientists, researchers, and other stakeholders around the world report changes beyond the natural variation of temperatures on land and in the ocean. Reports also show abnormal trends in the timing of seasons, in rainfall patterns, and in many other weather- and climate-related systems.

The science on climate change is clear. There is no question that these abnormal changes result from global warming due to an increased greenhouse effect caused by the vast amounts of greenhouse gases (GHG) added to the atmosphere by human activities.

In response to this, an international climate regime has developed — United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, businesses, research bodies, civil society and more are working together in support of UNFCCC to build the science and knowledge that allow us to tackle the causes and threats of climate change.

### KEY UNDERLYING FACTS FROM OUR SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE ON CLIMATE ARE:

The concentration of GHGs has been rising steadily since the time of the Industrial Revolution as a result of human activity, primarily the burning of fossil fuels and changes in land use, leading to increasing global temperatures.

The average global temperature on Earth is directly linked to the concentration of GHGs in the atmosphere. Small rises in temperature have major impacts on weather and climate systems, causing detrimental impacts for life and society.

Urgent action is needed to mitigate additional emissions, reduce the GHGs concentration in the atmosphere, and to adapt to the current and future impacts of climate change.

## UAE Ambassador supports green initiatives, highlights COP28

In a show of support for environmental initiatives and community partnerships, UAE Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi visited the Shamiah Volunteer Reserve in Kuwait last week. The visit was part of the UAE Embassy's efforts to highlight the importance of sustainability and to promote the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) taking place at Dubai Expo City in the UAE from 30 November to 12 December.



The Shamiah Volunteer Reserve is a hub for local women dedicated to greening and recycling efforts, striving to combat climate change and achieve carbon neutrality.

During the visit, Ambassador Al-Neyadi took the opportunity to learn more about the ongoing initiatives at the Reserve and to extend his support. During the visit, the ambassador presented the reserve's management with a plant shredder. The shredder will be used to recycle plant waste at the Reserve and transform it into organic fertilizer, contributing to the reserve's environmentally-friendly practices and sustainable endeavors.

Ambassador Al-Neyadi emphasized the communal nature of climate action, stressing that it necessitates raising awareness, promoting specialized environmental training, and fostering cooperation among various sectors. He also underscored the importance of supporting social initiatives and establishing partnerships to advance shared responsibility for sustainable living.

The ambassador further highlighted the significance of sustainable resources and innovation in energy, agriculture, and water management to achieve long-term development goals.





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## REWIRED SUMMIT ON EDUCATION DURING COP28

The second iteration of the RewirEd Summit, the flagship platform of Dubai Cares, is set to take place on 8 December at the Green Zone of Dubai Expo City on the sidelines of the 28th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28).

Dubai Cares, a global philanthropic organization, which is part of Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, has been working towards providing children and youth in developing countries with access to quality education through the design and funding of programs that aim to be impactful, sustainable and scalable.

The RewirEd Summit, which is being held as part of the 'Youth, Children, Education and Skills' Thematic Day on the sidelines of COP28, will advocate for rewired education systems as the core enabler for a sustainable future for people and the planet.

Bringing together heads of state, ministers, high-profile dignitaries from UN agencies, international NGOs, climate actors, CEOs and business leaders, as well as teachers, children, youth and indigenous leaders, the Summit seeks to drive concrete action towards education transformation for climate action through the active participation of all segments of society.

Chief Executive Officer and Vice-Chairman of Dubai Cares, Dr. Tariq Al Gurg, said: "Rewiring education for climate action is one of the most pressing needs of our time as it is the foundation of a sustainable future for people and the planet. With education being deprioritized in adaptation and mitigation strategies, the 2nd edition of the RewirEd Summit will serve as a much-awaited opportunity to position transformed education systems at the heart of climate strategies. The Summit's programming, therefore, has been carefully curated to ensure that it aligns with the priorities of the education sector, while also contributing to climate agendas through win-win solutions.

For his part, Chief Executive Officer of COP28, Adnan Ameen said: "Education is a critical driver to build the skills needed for the future climate economy. In this context, we are delighted to be working with Dubai Cares to bring the second edition of the RewirEd Summit to COP28. This will be a key opportunity to rally the solutions that can empower today's learners and accelerate actions that will determine our planet's future."

Aimed at catalyzing a much-needed shift in the thinking and action around the climate and education nexus, the sessions will focus on a series of interconnected themes that are crucial for achieving education transformation goals for climate action.

The RewirEd Summit program will focus on four areas: Rewiring Lifelong Learning for Green Jobs and Green Economy; Transformative Policy and Innovative Financing at the Nexus of Education and Climate Action; Leveraging Technology and Connectivity to Rewire Education Systems for Climate Adaptation and Mitigation; and People and Knowledge at the Heart of Transformation for People and Planet.,

# Pace of climate action needs to accelerate

The 2023 edition of the annual Yearbook of Global Climate Action released on day one of the COP28 climate conference finds that businesses, investors, cities, states and regions are stepping up to take climate action in greater numbers than ever before — just not at the pace or scale needed to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

"Climate action needs to accelerate everywhere. Systems transformation, from energy and transport to our relationship with nature and our social systems, is essential to rapidly reducing emissions and building resilience," said UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell. "Greater collaboration between Parties and non-Party stakeholders is an opportunity to radically enhance action towards our collective climate goals."

The 2023 Yearbook, the seventh of the series, provides an overview of the progress, trends and challenges of real-world climate action taken by non-Party stakeholders. For example, the Yearbook reports that the Global Climate Action Portal — a platform that tracks climate action around the globe — now has more than 32,000 registered actors, an increase of approximately six times higher than in 2015. However, gaps remain, both in terms of increasing the geographical coverage and breadth of climate action of the portal itself but also in the solutions being pursued by non-Party stakeholders.

In the Yearbook's foreword, High-Level Champions Mahmoud Mohieldin (Egypt) and Razan Al Mubarak (United Arab Emirates) jointly called for a step-up of climate action this decade. "Effective implementation, in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, is our common goal that needs to be pursued under the guiding principle of climate justice. The global stocktake is our opportunity to forge ahead, together," they wrote.

Other key advances outlined in the 2023 edition of the Yearbook include increased support to cities that are adapting to the impacts of climate change, more finance mobilized for marginalized groups such as Indigenous Peoples, the publication of a handbook to help non-Party stakeholders align their policies with net-zero goals, and



the launch of a report that explains how to unlock climate financing in Africa.

The 2023 Yearbook also has a strong focus on the conclusion of the first global stocktake at COP28, which got underway in Dubai today. The global stocktake is a process for countries and stakeholders to see

insights for how governments can come together at COP28 with a strong response to the stocktake. Seven key messages emerged from the Yearbook that could help inform the conclusion of the global stocktake:

Climate action needs to align with the goal of keeping the 1.5 degrees Celsius climate-resilient world within reach.

The opportunities to accelerate climate action exist, but need to be scaled up.

Non-Party stakeholders are key partners in ramping up climate action and ambition.

Credibility of action and commitments of non-Party stakeholders need to be systematically ensured.

International cooperation across sectors and actors, guided by the principle of climate justice, is instrumental in systems-transformation.

Climate action should not be siloed.

Fair finance flows are needed now.

"There can only be one response to the stocktake: renewed ambition and accelerated climate action; action that charts a course to 2030 to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and build resilience," said Stiell.



Mahmoud Mohieldin (Egypt) and  
Razan Al Mubarak (United Arab Emirates)



where they are collectively making progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Climate Change Agreement, and where they are not. Governments will take a decision on the global stocktake at COP28, which can be leveraged to accelerate ambition in their next round of climate action plans due in 2025.

Non-Party stakeholders shared their

## UN Chief calls for phasing out fossil fuels

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Excellencies, The diagnosis is clear. The success of this COP depends on the Global Stocktake prescribing a credible cure in three areas.

First, drastically cutting emissions. Current policies would lead to an earth-scorching three-degree temperature rise. The Global Stocktake must set clear expectations for economy-wide Nationally Determined Contributions, that cover all greenhouse gases, and align with the 1.5-degree limit. The G20, which represents 80 percent of the world's emissions, must lead. I urge countries to speed up their net zero timelines, to get there as close as possible to 2040 in developed countries and 2050 in emerging economies.

Second, we cannot save a burning planet with a firehose of fossil fuels. We must accelerate a just, equitable transition to renewables. The science is clear: The 1.5-degree limit is only possible if we ultimately stop burning all fossil fuels. Not reduce. Not abate. Phaseout — with a clear timeframe aligned with 1.5 degrees. The Global Stocktake must not only commit to that, it must also commit to triple renewables; double energy efficiency; and bring clean energy to all by 2030. The economics are clear: the global shift to renewables is inevitable. The only question is how much heating our planet will endure before it happens.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has recommended ending our addiction to coal by 2030 in OECD countries and 2040 for the rest of the world. At the same time, according to the International Energy Agency, the oil and

gas industry accounts for just one per cent of clean energy investment.

So, I have a message for fossil fuel company leaders: Your old road is rapidly aging.

Do not double-down on an obsolete business model. Lead the transition to renewables. Make no mistake, the road to climate sustainability is also the only viable pathway to economic sustainability of your companies.

I urge governments to help industry make the right choice — by regulating, legislating, putting a fair price on carbon, ending fossil fuel subsidies, and adopting a windfall tax on profits.

Excellencies, Third, climate justice is long overdue. Developing countries are being devastated by disasters they did not cause. Extortionate borrowing costs are blocking their climate action plans. And support is far too little, far too late.

The Global Stocktake must commit to a surge in finance, including for adaptation and loss and damage. And it must support reform of the multilateral development banks to leverage far more private finance at reasonable costs. Developed countries must show how they will double adaptation finance to \$40 billion a year by 2025, as promised, and clarify how they deliver on the \$100 billion, as promised.

Excellencies, The climate challenge is not just another issue in your inbox. Protecting our climate is the world's greatest test of leadership. I urge you to lead.

Humanity's fate hangs in the balance. Make this COP count.

Thank you.



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# In AI, Capital Wins Again



**Katharina Pistor**

Katharina Pistor, Professor of Comparative Law at Columbia Law School, is the author of *The Code of Capital: How the Law Creates Wealth and Inequality*.

Already on a long winning spree, capital has just scored another big victory in a clash over the ethics of artificial intelligence. In the drama over OpenAI CEO Sam Altman's sudden firing and rehiring, a non-profit company with a mission to prioritize AI safety over profits has failed spectacularly to keep its for-profit offspring on a leash.

OpenAI, Inc. was founded in 2015 with the goal of ensuring that artificial general intelligence — autonomous systems that can outperform humans in all or most tasks — does not become uncontrollable, if and when it is ever achieved. AGI's potential raises the same dilemma that Mary Shelley introduced in *Frankenstein*. Our creation might destroy us, but who can stop anyone from pursuing the fame, power, and wealth that "success" would confer? The Altman saga offers one answer: We cannot count on ethical rules, corporate-governance structures, or even principled governing board members to keep us safe. They tried, much to their credit, but it wasn't enough.

Originally, OpenAI, Inc. sought to raise enough funds through donations to compete in a fast-developing and highly competitive domain. But with only \$130 million generated in three years, it fell far short of its \$1 billion goal. It would need to turn to private capital while trying to preserve its original mission within an elaborate governance structure.

That meant creating two for-profit subsidiaries, with one wholly owned LLC serving as the general (managing) partner of its sibling within a limited partnership. Since limited partners do not have voting rights, OpenAI, Inc. exercised all control over the partnership, at least in theory. The limited partner then established its own LLC, OpenAI Global LLC, to attract private capital, including a \$13 billion investment from Microsoft, which did not wield formal control rights. Finally, the



original mission was secured by appointing several board members from the original non-profit to serve doubly as employees of OpenAI Global LLC, including Altman as chief executive.

What could possibly go wrong? Everything, as it turned out. When the board decided to fire the CEO of its sub-subsidiary — apparently for what a majority of its members saw as conflicts between his ambitions and the company's mission — the entire structure collapsed. Microsoft swooped in and offered to hire Altman and anyone willing to join him. That put OpenAI's financial future at risk. As it had warned in its operating agreement, 'Investing in OpenAI Global, LLC is a high-risk investment. Investors could lose their capital contribution and not see any return'.

That warning was no deterrent for Microsoft, which was less interested in dividends than in OpenAI's products and the people developing them. Though Altman has since been reinstated at OpenAI, together with a new board that seems more likely to do his bidding, it is safe to assume that Microsoft will be the one ultimately calling the shots. After all, Altman owes Microsoft his job and the future of the company he runs.

For all the media coverage that this drama generated, it does not represent anything new. Historically, capital usually wins out when there are competing visions for the future of an innovative product or business model.

Consider all the ambitious promises that private companies have made to address climate change (presumably in the hope of avoiding regulation or worse). In 2022, Larry Fink, the CEO of BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, predicted a 'tectonic shift' toward sustainable investment strategies. But he soon changed his tune. Having since downgraded climate change from an investment strategy to a mere risk factor, BlackRock now prides itself on ensuring 'corporate sustainability'. If the board of a non-profit with a firm commitment (in writing) to AI safety could not protect the world from its own CEO, we should not bet on the CEO of a for-profit asset manager to save us from climate change.

Likewise, consider the even longer-running saga of broken promises for the sake of profits in private money-creation. Money is all about credit, but there is a difference between mutualized credit, or state money, and privatized credit, or private money. Most money in circulation is private money, which

includes bank deposits, credit cards, and much more. Private money owes its success to state money. Without the state's willingness to maintain central banks to ensure the stability of financial markets, those markets and the intermediaries populating them would fail frequently, bringing the real economy down with them. States and banks are the oldest example of 'public-private partnerships', promising to benefit bankers and society alike.

But winners like to take all, and banks are no exception. They have been granted the enormous privilege of running the money mint, with the state backing the system in times of crisis. As other intermediaries have figured out how to join the party, few states have been willing to reassert control, lest they trigger capital flight. As a result, the financial system has grown so large that no central bank will be able to resist the call for yet another bailout the next time a crisis looms. The party always continues because sovereigns dance to capital's tune, not the other way around.

It is no surprise that OpenAI failed to stay on mission. If states cannot protect their citizens from the depredations of capital, a small non-profit with a handful of well-intentioned board members never stood a chance.

## Laos, a Paradise of Culture, Nature and History

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Besides investments from other ASEAN countries like Vietnam and Thailand, we currently have significant investments from China, South Korea, Australia, India, Japan and several European countries. Laos is always ready to welcome Kuwaiti enterprises and individuals and urges them to visit Laos and explore the immense potential for starting profitable ventures in various sectors, including in hydro-power energy, agriculture, forestry, tourism and hospitality, as well as in mining gold, copper and other minerals."

Asked about labor agreements between the two countries, the ambassador explained, "We have MoU in the field of exchange of manpower between two countries but so far the MoU has not been implemented due to lack of labor experiences and limit of knowledge especially on languages. However, we are looking at other possibilities and proper skills to discuss with

the Kuwait government in the future.

Elaborating on the tourism potential of Laos, the ambassador noted that his country was very welcoming to visitors, especially Kuwaiti visitors. He added, "The population of Laos is only around 7.5 million, but we have 49 ethnicities consisting of over 160 ethnic groups. These ethnic groups are officially designated by the government into three categories based on the geographic areas they occupy: the lowland ethnic groups known as Lao Loum, the midland groups known collectively as the Lao Theung, and the highland groups, Lao Sung.

"The groups have their own languages, customs and traditions and as a result we have festivals practically every month of the year. For example, we have a big festival, the Thatluang Festival in November every year to gather Lao people especially for the lowland group. In December, we will have a Norplejao or Hmong Festival New Year for the highland group, and in January, we will have a Khmu New year or

Keh Festival for the midland group.

The famous festival is Lao New Year or Pi Mai Lao is celebrated in the middle of April, before the start of the rainy season. "There are also many interesting places in each province of Laos. Laos has three UNESCO World heritage sites namely: the former royal capital Luang Prabang, the pre-Angkor Wat structure called Wat Phou Champasak Temple, and the Mysterious Plain of Jars in Xieng Khouang Province, that are recognized for their significant archaeological, historical and natural values.

"Additionally, Laos has many cultural, historical, and natural tourist sites such as natural waterfalls, caves, mountains, rivers and forests. The Lao government prioritizes green tourism and local community involvement. We also have many golf courses, rock climbing, trekking, or you could just spend a night or two in a local house of the ethnic people, to familiarize with the way of living of various ethnic groups. Lao food is also distinct in the

sense that we eat a lot of vegetables, spicy food and sticky rice that once Kuwaiti people taste they will want to have it again."

The ambassador noted that in a further boost to tourism to Laos, the Prime Minister of Laos, Sonexay Siphandone announced on 23 November, the opening the 'Visit Laos Year 2024', which coincides with the period that Lao PDR will assume the rotating Chairmanship of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This will be a good opportunity for the country to introduce its unique culture and traditions to international tourists. Lao PDR aims to attract at least 4.6 million visitors and earn about USD 700 million during the 'Visit Laos Year 2024'. We will have 79 activities nationwide under the theme of 'A Paradise of Lao Culture, Nature and History'. Therefore, we would like to invite all foreign visitors around the world to visit our country in order to have a new experience on Lao culture and enjoy the traditional festival, music and dance performances of the country."





EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# If Europe Could Do It, So Can the Middle East



**Anne-Marie Slaughter**

*A former director of policy planning in the US State Department, she is CEO of the think tank New America, a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin, Professor Emerita of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University, and the author of *Renewal: From Crisis to Transformation in Our Lives, Work, and Politics*.*



In 1951, just six years after World War II, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany signed the Treaty of Paris, establishing the European Coal and Steel Community.

It was a remarkable achievement, considering that France and Germany had fought three major wars between 1870 and 1945, leading to millions of deaths, the ravaging of lands and cities, and territorial conquest on both sides. Even decades later, my Belgian mother, who fled the German occupation of Brussels as a child with her mother and brother, trembled at the sight of a German customs uniform. Yet these former enemies agreed to pool their coal and steel production in ways that would prevent them from forging weapons to be used against one another ever again.

At a stroke, a handful of visionary statesmen — Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet of France, Konrad Adenauer of West Germany, and Alcide de Gasperi of Italy — laid the foundation for a new European future. The 'Old Continent' of religious and nationalist wars, great-power

Biden has told Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu that it is "the only way forward" over the longer term, once Hamas's ability to attack Israel or Israelis is destroyed. For the Palestinian people to recognize Israel's right to exist and contribute to a lasting peace, Biden reasons, they must be able to envision a future of independence, security, and prosperity for themselves.

Yet in the two decades since the failure of the Oslo Accords — which mapped out a path to peace in the early 1990s — demographic and geographic realities have complicated matters. Owing to the growing Israeli-Arab population within Israel and the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank under an Israeli government opposed to Palestinian statehood, the prospect of population exchanges and land swaps has become more difficult and politically fraught.

Under these changing conditions, supporters of a two-state solution have had to get more creative. One alternative, proposed by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin in 2015, is to establish a kind of confederation, which would bring the proposed two states closer together through freedom of movement across state borders and joint decision-making on issues affecting the entire territory. Similarly, Israeli human-rights lawyer May Pundak envisions a 'two-state solution 2.0', wherein a two-state confederation would share a homeland, following the model of the European Union.

Yet after the horrors of Hamas's October 7 attack and the ongoing Israeli response (which has already killed thousands of civilians), how could the two sides ever choose to move closer together rather than further apart? Here, the European experience offers three important lessons.

First, the shooting must end, and the cost of the conflict must be high enough to create support for bold, enduring changes on both sides. In the current conflict, providing lasting security for all Palestinians and Israelis likely will require engagement by the US and multiple Arab governments and their militaries, both on site and at one remove. Only after security is achieved — probably following new Israeli and Palestinian elections — can the cataclysm of this latest round of violence become an impetus for envisioning a new future.

Second, it helps to start small. Do not begin with an outline of two separate states and a long list of issues to resolve between them. Instead, find the equivalent of the European Coal and Steel Community. Given its scarcity, the most important shared interest for Israelis and Palestinians is probably water. Joint management of water conservation, desalination, and usage

union to make sense. The seed for the European Economic Community was Benelux, a customs union between Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Agreed in 1944 and established in 1947, it became a full 'Economic Union' in 1958, providing a prototype for the European Economic Community. A natural starting point for Israelis and Palestinians would be some kind of free-trade area that includes Jordan and Egypt, with Saudi Arabia and one or more of the Gulf States added soon thereafter.

New thinking requires new thinkers. The Israeli and Palestinian groups that will be most receptive to real change are likely to be drawn from women, young people, and Israeli Arabs, many of whom have been caring for the survivors of the October 7 attack and engaging in other civic activity within Israel. Climate activists, ecologists, public-health authorities, and professionals in other fields that transcend national boundaries are also natural allies. Supporters of a lasting peace should be organizing and funding new social movements and political coalitions.

Is this vision pie in the sky? Perhaps. But without a compelling and plausible strategy for the day after, the day after may never come. Europe transcended two millennia of wars triggered by deep ethnic, religious, political, and cultural divisions to create a new political entity. So, too, can the Middle East.

“

Given its scarcity, the most important shared interest for Israelis and Palestinians is probably water. Joint management of water conservation, desalination, and usage would make it much harder for it to be weaponized.

”

intrigue, secret diplomacy, and the endless redrawing of national boundaries (with little regard for the people within them) became a new kind of political entity. After being conceived as a community, it eventually grew into a 'union' of nation-states that retained enough of their sovereignty to act both independently and together.

It is a familiar story, but one that bears repeating in these dark days of war between historic and seemingly permanent adversaries. In the Middle East, the war between Israel and Hamas has put the concept of a two-state solution — a Palestinian state alongside an Israeli one — back on the table. US President Joe

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# Loss and Damage as a Common Climate Cause



**Naveeda Khan**

A professor of anthropology at Johns Hopkins University (JHU), she sits on the board of the JHU Center for Islamic Studies and serves as affiliate faculty for the JHU Undergraduate Program in Environmental Science and Studies. She is the author of *In Quest of a Shared Planet: Negotiating Climate from the Global South*.

As the start of this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) approaches, those leading it continue to inspire concern and even indignation. After all, the host will be the United Arab Emirates, among the world's largest oil-producing countries, and the head of the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, Sultan Al Jaber, will be running the proceedings. But is that really so bad?

The Middle East is not exactly the climate champion of our time. Regional leaders have historically doubted climate science and often refused to help poorer countries suffering from climate-related damage. But it is the role of Al



Jaber himself that is most controversial. As US Representative Ro Khanna put it, having the head of a national oil company as the president-designate of a climate conference is a "slap in the face to young climate activists."

This explains why, earlier this year, over 130 members of the US Congress and the European Parliament signed a letter calling for his removal. But while the developed world has largely balked at Al Jaber's appointment, many developing countries openly support it.

The UN-sponsored global climate negotiations are intended to keep countries, both friends and rivals, engaged with one another and aware that, despite our differences, we all share a planet. While they tend to be dominated by the actors one might expect — developed countries like the United States, as well as rising powers like China — they are also one of the rare multilateral forums where questions of historical responsibility might be raised.

To be sure, the advanced economies do not exactly reckon with their legacy of violent and extractive colonialism at COPs, even though that history directly enabled their industrialization and all the associated greenhouse-gas emissions. But, to some extent, they do acknowledge their disproportionate contributions to climate change. Meanwhile, smaller, poorer countries are granted a kind of moral authority and, often, the opportunity to exercise a greater political voice than they have elsewhere.

My country, Bangladesh, is a case in point. In recent years, Bangladesh has been battered by severe cyclones and floods, which will only worsen as sea levels rise. And yet it accounts for just 0.4 percent of the world's greenhouse-gas emissions.

Countless well-meaning academics and activists have underscored this imbalance, though often in simplistic and unconstructive ways. I distinctly remember watching with dread as a Western climate scientist recounted the real-world effects of climate change, and, in particular, the horrors that lay ahead for vulnerable countries, at a 2015 conference at the University of Oregon. When she brought up Bangladesh, she began to sob as she repeated her desperate question: "What have they done to deserve this?" Heads swiveled in my direction — I was the only

Bangladeshi person at the conference — but I could only sit slumped at my seat, skewered by a lance of pity and liberal guilt.

As an anthropologist who has studied COPs for nearly a decade, I have watched developing countries approach climate negotiations in surprising and creative ways. And I can assure you Bangladesh is not as hapless as that panel speaker implied. As the sociologist Kasia Paprocki has observed, the highly market-friendly Bangladesh has turned climate-change adaptation into an economic opportunity. Similarly, the anthropologist Jason Cons has pointed out that Bangladesh has managed to cultivate the contradictory image of a country on the brink of ruin from climate change and one flush with economic opportunity.

At COPs, Bangladesh has distinguished itself as a leader on the issue of loss and damage. While the emotional theatrics are unnecessary, it bears repeating that, in countries like Bangladesh, people are already losing their homes, livelihoods, and lives to the effects of climate change. Even if the world begins to reduce emissions rapidly, these losses will not be undone.

Loss and damage makes developed countries nervous. If they acknowledge that climate change cannot be fully mitigated, and that there are limits to human and ecosystem adaptation, the next logical step could well be to seek legal means of pressuring them to pay far more to compensate climate-vulnerable countries.

Recognizing this, Bangladesh initially took a diplomatic approach to the issue of loss and damage: instead of pushing developed economies to assume liability, it advocated protections for climate-displaced refugees, such as a resettlement policy or a refugee-coordination agency. A Bangladeshi delegate was involved in the creation of the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage in 2013, and Bangladeshi voices contributed to the agreement to establish a Loss and Damage Fund at last year's COP.

Bangladesh is also a member of the Like-Minded Developing Countries, established in 2012 to keep the needs and interests of the Global South on the COP agenda. Not all the LMDC's members, from Pakistan to China, have the moral authority of Bangladesh when it comes to climate change. Hearing Saudi Arabia, for example, weigh in on historical emissions or debt distress is a bit rich. But wealthier Middle Eastern countries lend a certain rhetorical and political heft to the LMDC's cause. This might explain why so many poorer countries, including Bangladesh, are coming out in support of a COP host that continues to woo oil companies even as it advocates for green energy.

In this sense, the leadership of the UAE and Al Jaber may not be out of line with the goals of young climate activists after all. On the contrary, the future these activists seek to avoid is already the reality for countries like Bangladesh. Effective action on loss and damage today, the action the Global South is fighting for, would thus serve everyone's interests. Any effort by the UAE to use its position to advance progress on this front should be welcomed.

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for the  
**week**

The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts.

— **Bertrand Russell**  
British philosopher



# New medication lowers BP for up to six months

A new medication under trial has been found to significantly lower blood pressure (BP) for up to six months with a single dose administered through an injection. The medication could benefit many people who forget to take their daily prescribed drugs on schedule, which increases their risk of a cardiovascular event such as a heart attack or stroke.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) nearly 1.3 billion adults aged 37-79 years worldwide have hypertension, and around half of those with this high blood pressure are unaware they have this condition.

Moreover, two in three of those living with hypertension are in low- and middle-income countries where they have limited access to adequate healthcare. High blood pressure is estimated to cause the death of 7.6 million people worldwide.

People with high blood pressure may not feel symptoms. The only way to know is to get your blood pressure checked. Generally, an ideal blood pressure reading is considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg. High blood pressure is considered to be 140/90mmHg or higher, while low blood pressure is considered to be below 90/60mmHg.

Blood pressure that remains elevated for too long can increase your risk for cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, vision loss, and sexual dysfunction. Lifestyle changes like eating a healthier diet, quitting tobacco and being more active can help lower blood pressure. Some people may still need to take medication on a daily basis to keep their blood pressure under control.

The new drug, called zilebesiran, works by inhibiting the body's ability to produce angiotensin, a chemical made mainly in the liver that causes blood vessels to constrict, which increases blood pressure. By reducing the constriction of blood vessels, zilebesiran helps lower blood pressure.



Medical experts have highlighted the positive potential of the new medication noting that many patients consistently forget to take their medications as prescribed, so a medication that is effective for six months after a single injection has the potential to improve health outcomes for patients.

The researchers behind the new drug investigated the safety and efficacy of zilebesiran in 394 people with mild-to-moderate hypertension, which is defined as having systolic blood pressure between 135-160 mm Hg. Systolic blood pressure, which is the number on the top half of the fraction denoting blood pressure, measures the amount of pressure in your arteries as the heart contracts. The bottom half of the fraction, the diastolic pressure, measures the pressure when the heart expands.

The participants in the study had an average systolic blood pressure of 142mmHg. They were then randomly assigned to receive a specific subcutaneous dose of zilebesiran — 150, 300 or 600 mg once every six months or 300 mg once every three months — or a placebo. Over the course of the six-month study, the team found that the injection dramatically reduced systolic blood pressure — by at least 10mmHg on average, and, in some

cases, by 20mmHg or more.

Those who took zilebesiran were more likely to have a 24-hour average systolic blood pressure of 130mmHg or less by the six-month mark. As the average systolic blood pressure at the start of this study was 142mmHg, this meant that a patient's blood pressure could be brought to a 'normal' range simply with this injection, without the help of additional blood pressure medications. It is worth noting that very few participants experienced adverse events, which predominantly included mild reactions at the injection site. Zilebesiran could be given quarterly or bi-annually, improving adherence.

Meanwhile, an unrelated study on the relation between hypertension and salt intake found that irrespective of whether a patient has been prescribed hypertension medication or not, it is advisable for people to cut their salt intake to maintain a healthy heart.

The new study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) shows that reducing salt intake by 1 teaspoon each day can reduce your blood pressure even further than using just medication. In fact, this one simple step can provide the same effect as a common blood pressure medication called

hydrochlorothiazide.

To arrive at this conclusion, the researchers randomly placed middle-aged to older adults into groups who were to eat either a high-sodium or low-sodium diet. People who ate the high-sodium diet added 2,200 milligrams per day to their usual intake.

Those who ate a low-sodium diet consumed only 500 milligrams per day. At the end of a week of eating this way, each group crossed over into the other group for an additional week.

A day prior to each study visit, people wore blood pressure monitors to check their blood pressure. They also collected their urine for 24 hours in order to assess their sodium intake. The research team found that systolic blood pressure (the top number of the blood pressure reading) was reduced by 7 mm Hg to 8 mm Hg in the group who ate a low-sodium diet versus a high-sodium one.

Additionally, their blood pressure was 6 mm Hg less than what it was when they ate their usual diet. The authors report that the blood pressure-lowering effect was quite consistent, with 72 percent of people in the study experiencing a reduction in their blood pressure when they ate less salt. Furthermore, the intervention worked rapidly with people seeing a change within only one week.

Health experts and nutritionists recommend that a healthy adult should keep their sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day. For those with high blood pressure or heart disease, they recommend less than 1,500 mg per day. To put these milligrams in perspective, a teaspoon of salt is about 2,300 milligrams of sodium. But doctors also warn that adults with hypertension should not lower salt intake to less than 1200 mg per day, as sodium is needed to maintain stable equilibrium in the body.

## Scientists identify a sixth taste sense

A recent research study has identified a new taste response that had not been recorded previously. Results of the study, published this October found that in addition to the five basic tastes humans can also detect ammonium chloride, creating a strong sensation, which the researchers described as "bitter, salty, and a little sour."

According to the report, ammonium chloride activates receptors in our cells that detect salty and sour tastes. The new ammonium chloride taste adds to the five basic tastes that we already know of: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, umami, which is a savory flavor similar to that of monosodium glutamate.



The ability to taste ammonia — a smell and taste that indicates certain foods, including seafood and meat, may have become spoiled — could be a survival mechanism that evolved over time. The ability to detect this taste, and then avoid it, would be a way to ensure that we do not eat spoiled meat or fish that could contain dangerous bacteria that could harm us..

Taste serves an important function in people. For example, while taste buds help us experience

flavor and decide what to eat, they also help us detect toxins and keep us safe. When our taste receptors are activated, they send messages to our brain that help us perceive taste and react accordingly. Based on that information, we can decide if food is good or dangerous, or if we want more of it. Ammonium can be toxic at high doses, and many people and animals find the taste of ammonium aversive. It is believed this prevents many animals from consuming waste and decaying matter.

In certain scenarios, people can actually enjoy the taste of ammonium chloride. For instance in Scandinavian countries, it is used in salty licorice. The discovery of a sixth sense of taste has led some scientists to speculate that there could be many other tastes that have so far not been identified. Future studies can help us identify how human taste cells and receptors respond to various substances.

To determine how ammonium activates taste cells, the researchers exposed cultured human cells to ammonium chloride. They found that the compound activated a specific type of receptor called OTOPI1 in our sour-taste cells. The researchers expanded their study to investigate how mice responded to water with and without ammonium chloride.

They found that rodents without the OTOPI1 receptors did not react to ammonium chloride, whereas mice with the receptors avoided the compound. The study suggests that the response in both human and mouse OTOPI1 channels is similar to how the receptors reacted to acid. This finding helped the researchers to surmise that OTOPI1 receptors are essential for helping humans detect the taste of ammonium chloride.

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