

Declaration of the Kuwait International Conference on "Integrity for Development"

We, the participants at the Kuwait International Conference on "Integrity for Development" held in Kuwait City on 15 and 16 January 2019 under the auspices of H.H. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Recognizing that integrity is a cornerstone of sustainable development which cannot be achieved with corruption, lack of transparency, accountability and rule of law,

Committed to the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which is the primary international reference to set policies and identify practices to prevent and criminalize corruption, enforce relevant laws, strengthen international cooperation against it and recover assets in corruption cases,

Aware of the need to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 goals adopted by world leaders,

- 1- We stress** on the need to prioritize the implementation of the sustainable development Goal number 16 on "Peace, justice and strong institutions", given its key role in achieving the other goals of Agenda 2030 and all related national plans and programs,
- 2- We welcome** the growing expression of political commitment to promote integrity and fight corruption around the world, and we call for its translation into action through promoting international cooperation, provisioning adequate financial and human resources to elaborate and develop national strategies, supporting specialized bodies and protecting their independence, building their technical capacities and facilitate

operational cooperation among them, as well as provide adequate space for joint action and societal participation in this regard,

- 3- **We call for** developing a new generation of Anti-Corruption strategies with a greater openness to the private sector and civil society, deeper focus on the preventive aspect through reforming legislation, regulations, policies and procedures to reduce risks of corruption and adoption of mechanisms and plans appropriate to the specificity of different sectors in each country such as health, education, customs and others,
- 4- **We encourage** States and specialized bodies to develop innovative preventive measures to combat corruption in the public sector, in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 2 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and similar to other successful practices in the field, to promote ethics and integrity in public office; adopt effective methodologies to manage risks of corruption, simplify procedures and implement e-government, and promote transparency and accountability in the management of public funds and public affairs,
- 5- **We urge** strengthening the public-private cooperation to promote integrity and fighting corruption in doing business, implement internal compliance in companies and compliance of all with the provisions of the law, which will directly contribute to support economic reforms, promote competitiveness and attract investment,
- 6- **We emphasize** that transparency is an essential condition to fight corruption, with the right to access to information, the protection of peaceful exercise of freedom of expression and openness to other stakeholders as main pillars. This provides a tangible impact on fostering citizens' confidence in state institutions and establishing sustainable security and stability,
- 7- **We draw attention** of States to adopt credible national indicators to have a more complete and clear picture of their efforts in promoting integrity and fighting corruption, benefiting of the various relevant international indicators and pursue efforts to develop and increase their added value,

- 8- **We commit ourselves** to strengthening cooperation between our countries and our regional and international organizations in the field of enhancing integrity and fighting corruption through the exchange of expertise and best practices and boosting legal and judicial cooperation across borders, including extradition of criminals and fugitives and recovering assets from corruption cases,

- 9- **We commend** the State of Kuwait for its efforts to promote integrity and fight corruption and to support regional and international dialogues in this regard. We also congratulate it on the adoption of its first national strategy in this field, which represents a solid model based on a participatory approach and inspired by the most modern trends, as well as on the selection of the Kuwaiti Anti-Corruption Authority (NAZAHA) to assume the presidency of the seventh session of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET),

- 10- **We strongly believe** that we owe it to future generations to work together towards developing a culture of integrity in our societies and institutions. Education and raising awareness are an integral part of this mission. Moving forward is no longer an option but a shared responsibility, assumed in line with the Sustainable Development Goals to guarantee the right of future generations to a better life,

In conclusion, we thank His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, for his presence and patronage of our Conference and express our appreciation and gratitude to all those who contributed to its organization and success, headed by the Kuwaiti Anti-Corruption Authority (NAZAHA) and the United Nations Organization. We also express our wish that this conference turns into a periodic international platform to monitor and support joint action to promote integrity for sustainable development.