

Human Trafficking at the Crossroads

Private-Public Partnership to Fight Human Trafficking

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Speech

by

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Your Highness Shaikha Sabeeka,
Your Excellency Mrs. Mubarak,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to be with you here today. I would like to begin by thanking the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain for taking the bold step of organizing and hosting this conference.

While this conference is entitled "Human Trafficking: At the Crossroads", the Ministry's successful efforts to bring together government and business shows that we are in fact beyond the crossroads. We have chosen to take the path of partnership, determination and dialogue – a challenging path and one less traveled but ultimately, the one that will carry our actions to fruition.

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Board of Directors of the "Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement" in this outstanding event.

As one of the hosts of the Athens Round Table of the Business Community against Human Trafficking on January 2006, and being present at the launch of the End Human Trafficking Now campaign, I wish to express how delighted I am to see the progress we have made since then – in such a short time.

Human trafficking is such a terrible global problem that it is easy for us to get discouraged. But, after this Conference here in Bahrain, I know that we have taken the right step in launching this campaign.

"The Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement" is true evidence of the role of women in the quest for a just society but also for a society with a greater wealth of ideas, vision and action.

For this reason, I would first like to commend the great vision and foresight of its Founder and President, Her Excellency Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak. She has been the driving force behind this initiative, inspiring all of us and radiating her energy, determination and sensitivity in every effort. Because of her, the fight against human trafficking is a top priority of the civil society and of the private sector, not only in the Middle East but worldwide.

I would also like to commend the tremendous support in our campaign, of Her Highness Shaikha Sabeeka, who has so kindly and generously hosted this Conference in her beautiful and historic country. Her personal contribution through this Conference and several other projects as well as her support to our Movement, which has worked tirelessly on this issue, have been extremely decisive factors of our success.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Movement, I wish to thank both of them for offering such a strong feeling of hope to humanity and for giving us the knowledge, the inspiration and the means to work next to them for such a noble cause.

And I would like to assure them and all of you that my husband – the President of Motor Oil – and I will always do our best to support the campaign “End Human Trafficking Now”.

We leave this day with this wonderful declaration that was pronounced by Her Excellency Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak on behalf of all of us. And I would like to propose to reconvene this meeting in two years from now, in Egypt, that has been the cradle of this activity, together with our partners in the Women’s Coalition which was the first to endorse the campaign “End Human Trafficking Now” Until then, we will work very hard to be able to report on the progress we have made with all our partners.

The protection of the most vulnerable groups, especially children, will be our first priority. We join our forces in order to create the necessary conditions and a protective environment for all children. An environment which will safeguard them from any exploitation and abuse before it happens, and where they can grow up in safety and in dignity. It is in our hands and our responsibility to offer them what is their basic right. The right to live free, to play, to go to school, to dream!

In my capacity as Board Member of the Movement, I pledge my full support, as I have done today in this Conference, and I will continue to enlist the support of the business community worldwide to join us in this effort.

Thank you!