

Press Releases: Interview With Manayer Ebrahim Al-Qallaf of Kuwait Television

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Kuwait City, Kuwait
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QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, thank you for having us today, and it's a privilege to be with you today.

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's wonderful to be with you. Thank you for your time today.

QUESTION: First of all, let me go through the deep relationship that are shared among the state of Kuwait and the United States of America. Would you further elaborate on the history of these friendly ties?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So the two nations have a long, storied, proud tradition partnering together, working alongside each other against threats all throughout the region. We all know the stories from the early 1990s, but the stories go on even these past years, where we work together on so many things. It's what I'm here today to do, to continue to develop the partnership between the United States and Kuwait.

QUESTION: Yes. Mr. Secretary, you will be holding several meetings during your visit in Kuwait, including the third Kuwait-U.S. Strategic Dialogue. Let us know more about it.

SECRETARY POMPEO: So there are many components to it. I will, I'll get a chance to meet with His Majesty the Amir, my foreign ministry counterpart, the deputy prime minister. The strategic dialogue has been going on now since 2016, and we'll talk about the important strategic elements of our relationship, our security relationship to be sure, where we keep both the people of the United States and Kuwait safer as a result. But there are important economic pillars to this as well, and our political relationship matters, whether we're countering ISIS or the threats that Iran presents to the region, working to make sure that the Gulf Cooperation Council is working and functioning and delivering security and peace to the region. These will be all parts of our agenda today and I am confident we'll make progress on each of those things.

QUESTION: Yes, connected to the agenda, Mr. Secretary, how do you think the agenda will help strengthen mutual cooperation between both countries?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So we'll sign some agreements today too, which I think will be important. They'll deepen the economic relationship. Kuwait and Kuwaiti companies are big investors in the United States, and many American companies are part of the Kuwaiti economy. These are deep, strong, proud commercial relationships that build on the security relationship between our two countries as well.

QUESTION: Yes. Mr. Secretary, regarding your tour to the Middle East and several Arab capitals, including Egypt, Amman, and the Gulf, GCC, like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, now Kuwait. So of course, it has like a certain – the GCC has, like, their common stances and views on the regional and international issues. In your opinion, Mr. Secretary, what would your visit add on this regard?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I've been to the Middle East many times. I've had great meetings. I've been here to Kuwait several times before as well. Each time we're able to build on what we've done before, and the world changes. The threats change as well. And so each of the encounters – I'll travel from here to Israel and then on to Lebanon – in each place we'll be working on a set of common objectives. There will be places too where we'll have different views, where we'll have different ideas about how to solve these particular problems, and having these meetings, both with me and my counterparts and each of our teams, to begin to work on how we actually execute and implement those shared objectives.

QUESTION: Yes, let me close this with this question, and I will talk about the role of His Majesty, the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad Jabir al-Sabah, about his mediation in the GCC conflict or issues and the humanitarian part, like helping the Syrian and Yemeni and Iraqi people. How do you describe that, Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So His Majesty the Amir has done fantastic work on each of those fronts. Kuwait and the Kuwaiti people have been most generous in helping with the humanitarian crisis. You mentioned Syria. You mentioned Yemen, an enormous humanitarian challenge. Kuwait has been at the forefront of trying to provide assistance for those in the region who really need help, and he has also been determined to try and make sure that all of the Gulf states get along, that they realize that their shared objective, the threats that are posed to them collectively, override anything that may fall between them where there's differences. And so he's worked to create peace and stability throughout the Middle East too. Your country should be very proud of that.

QUESTION: Yeah, thank you so much, Mr. Secretary –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you.

QUESTION: – for having us today, and it's such a pleasure and honor to have you today on Kuwait TV.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you very much. I enjoyed it a great deal. It's wonderful to be here.

QUESTION: Thank you, thank you.

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