

Speech of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said before The Third Session of The Council of Oman

21/10/2003

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Praise be to God, through whose bounty good works are achieved, and may Blessings and Peace be upon the one who brought Guidance to lead the people out of the darkness, and upon his Family and Companions, as long as the earth and the heavens remain.

Honourable Members of the Council of Oman

Dear Citizens,

THROUGH the Grace of God we meet again reaffirm our determination to consolidate and develop the Shura (consultation) path in a manner that will serve the interests of the nation and meet the aspirations of its citizens. From the very beginning it was our wish to see Oman embark upon its own enterprise in the field of democratic action in which its citizens play their part in taking national decisions. This enterprise has been built up brick-by-brick on firm foundations based on the realities of Omani life and the conditions of the age in which we live. This is reflected in the step-by-step approach which we adopted in this regard, which culminated in all legally eligible citizens – both men and women – being granted the right to vote.

From our side, we extend our patronage and support to this process, while our government from its side is performing its duty in co-operating with the State Council (Majlis A'Dawla) and the Consultation Council (Majlis A'Shura). However, we must point out here that another important dimension also needs to exist in order to ensure that the process bears fruit: this dimension is the activity in which you, the members of the two Councils, are engaged and the extent to which you yourselves are supporting the enterprise, whether through the recommendations and practical proposals you put forward, or through the way in which you help raise the level of public awareness about relevant issues.

Human enterprise can only succeed if there is constant endeavour,

accompanied by determination, a strong will and a sense of responsibility. No nation can achieve its goal unless it unites and works together to build its future and develop its potential.

We are fully confident that all of you – both men and women – will play your part in developing and building up this Omani enterprise and reinforcing its roots through hard work and wise responsible endeavour for the sake of the nation and its citizens.

Honourable Members of the Council of Oman

Dear Citizens,

We will not go into elaborate detail in describing the past achievements of the Omani Renaissance in various spheres of life. However, we should point out that if by the Grace of God we are enjoying prosperity today, then we also have a duty not to forget that our thoughts and plans should be focused on the future. This is because major targets and many challenges lie ahead of us and the road is long. We are therefore required to arm ourselves with knowledge, a firm will and a readiness for hard work, and to seek success from God.

We have attached major priority to our domestic policy since the beginning of the Blessed Renaissance so that our human resources can be developed in such a way as will enable them to serve the community and work for the good of the nation. We appreciate the efforts being made by the different state authorities in this field, and we also commend the private sector's contributions to the education and training programmes and to developing manpower skills and producing qualified Omani personnel. In particular, we support this sector's moves to establish colleges and universities in different parts of the Sultanate in order to provide the widest possible opportunities for higher education within the country.

We call upon those in charge of these universities to make them easily accessible to young Omanis who wish to enroll in them. We also call upon them to focus on their academic syllabi, ensure that they are constantly developed and updated so that their universities can be assured of their place among the ranks of distinguished institutions, and increase the numbers of students applying to study in them. Here we should also like to point out that over the past two years we have been observing the private sector's efforts to provide job opportunities for nationals in its companies and establishments.

In urging young Omanis to make use of the available educational, training and job opportunities, we should like everyone to understand that our repeated calls for attention to be given to human resources – to education, training and employment – reflect the importance we attach to this vital issue – an issue which we regard as the corner stone of the future and the main stimulus enabling us to reach our goals.

We should also like to note that in July 2001 we issued a Royal Decree on the General Census of Population, Housing and Establishment which stated that the actual count should begin in December of this year – 2003. In stressing the importance of the Census results for the country's future development plans, we call upon everyone to co-operate fully with those in charge of implementing the project, provide them with accurate information and do everything possible to help ensure success in achieving the desired goals.

With regard to foreign policy, we strongly call for the establishment of a sovereign, viable Palestinian state at the earliest opportunity, for the Arab states to recover their lands and their sovereignty, and for peace, security and stability to prevail in every part of the world. Injustice is darkness, and we are against injustice and darkness and on the side of justice, light and harmony. Mankind will only enjoy happiness and a sense of security if there is justice and respect for all those things which guarantee human beings their legitimate rights. First and foremost of these is their right to honour, dignity and freedom from humiliation, and their right to liberty and independence.

Praise be to God Who has guided us to this state. We would not have been guided were it not for the fact that God has guided us.

May God grant you success in your endeavours.

And may Peace be upon you and God's Mercy and Blessings.

