



الجمعية الكويتية لحقوق الإنسان
KUWAIT SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

**Civil Society
Declaration on
Countering Hate
Speech and
Incitement to Hatred
durig the COVID-19
pandemic-Kuwait**

PREFACE

- › The world is facing an unprecedented crisis of global public health emergency of COVID19. Guaranteeing human rights for everyone poses a challenge for every country. This is not a time to neglect human rights. It is a time when, more than ever, human rights are needed to navigate this crisis in dignity and respect.
- › Believing in Kuwait's role in supporting peace, justice and equality in the world, and its commitment to a culture of tolerance, and non-violence;
- › Recalling the principle of equality between all, and the right to be free from discrimination as reflected in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which asserts that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- › Recalling that all human beings are thus entitled to the same enjoyment of all rights, without discrimination of any kind, including on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or any other status.
- › Affirming that all human beings are entitled to fundamental and inalienable rights that cannot be derogated including in times of emergencies or health crisis;
- › Believing in the society's role in working side by side with governmental and non-governmental actors to assist in the implementation of international human rights obligations, as we face the impact of COVID19 pandemic;
- › We, civil society actors wish to declare our commitment to human rights and speak out against all forms of violence, hate speech and incitement to hatred;

CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION ON COUNTERING HATE SPEECH AND INCITEMENT TO HATRED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC- KUWAIT

Article (1) on definitions and purpose of this announcement

a) **Hate speech** can be understood as “any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, which attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or other identity factor¹.”

b) **Incitement to hatred:** Kuwait became party to the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights in 1996. In its Article 20, the Covenant notes that: “Any propaganda for war and any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law”. Kuwait is also party to International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination since 1968. In its Article 4, the Convention called upon State parties to adopt immediate and positive measures designed to eradicate all incitement to, or acts of, such discrimination, and inter alia: Shall not permit public authorities or public institutions, national or local, to promote or incite racial discrimination.

Article (2) We are born equal

- a. We, who are present in the State of Kuwait, believe that we are all human beings without any differences between us. Humanity unites us without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- b. We are all equal in dignity. We have the same rights and have the same obligations.

Article (3) We are united against

- a. Initiating or participating in any incitement to hatred, or interacting with it in any way;
- a. Inciting to discrimination and violence and promoting them in any media or mass media or making them public in any mass gathering.

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[UNITED NATIONS STRATEGY AND PLAN OF ACTION ON HATE SPEECH](#)

Article (4) We are entitled to fundamental freedoms

- a. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed in international human rights treaties to which Kuwait is party, and as stipulated in the Constitution of Kuwait;
- a. Conversely, efforts to address hate speech must not undermine the right to freedom of expression. Restrictions of freedom of speech need to remain within strictly defined parameters to comply with international human rights law.
- a. Freedom of expression may not be used in any way in a manner that incites others, diminishes them or calls them in any capacity or form that leads to underestimating their ability and undermining their dignity.

Article (5) We are against societal division

It is not permissible in any way to participate in incitement to discrimination and violence or hate speech, and it is necessary to define that these speeches are a wave that tries to lead everyone to open confrontations against all with the aim of creating a societal division.

Article (6) It is our duty - All of us

- a. To solemnly oppose violent messages, hate and incitement with speeches and on the contrary call for humane interaction and limit discrimination and division.
- b. To monitor and inform the concerned authorities of any letter calling for violence, inciting hatred or inciting against others.

Article (7) We call upon the State to protect against hate speech that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence

- a. Public officials, religious/community leaders, members of the judiciary, and media organizations play a particularly important role, and have a particular responsibility, in promoting a culture of peace, tolerance and mutual respect, and in speaking out against and avoid legitimizing hateful speech. In this regard, we call on all actors to enforce ethical guidelines in relation to the conduct of their representatives, particularly with respect to public speech;

- b. The state must implement programmes aimed at promoting the principles of tolerance among members of society and involve the local community and civil society organizations in the design and implementation of these programmes.
- c. The state must guarantee the promotion of the principle of justice and impartiality in legislation and in the enforcement of laws and judicial and administrative procedures and the opportunity for all without any discrimination.
- d. The state should take all necessary measures to confront the speech of violence, hatred and societal incitement, and take actions that respect human rights against those who launch it or against the propagators of these speeches in any form of promotion.

Authority	Name of Representative
Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights	Khaled Al Humaidi Al Ajmi - Chairman
Development Entrepreneurship Association	Ghadeer Abdulmohsen Al Juma
Support Advocates & Legal Consultants Law Firm	Lawyer / Atyab AlShatti
Kuwaiti Society for National Fraternity	Rakan Bin Hathleen - Chairman
Women's Cultural & Social Society	Luluwa Saleh Al Mulla - Chairman
Women Diwan	Dr. Zainab Al Ziady
Union Of Kuwaiti Craftsmen	Lawyer / Mohammad Al Humaidi – Chairman
The Kuwaiti Association of the Basic Evaluators for Human Rights (KABEHR)	Ahmad Abbas Hamad Al Rasheedi
Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR)	
Workers Guild in Kuwait University	Haitham Khaled Al Hajeri – Chairman
Workers Guild in The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training	Eng. Mohammad Al Kandari
Kuwait Association for Deaf Impairment	Mr. Ahmad Mohsen Al Shoushani
Kuwait National Integrity Association	Ahmad Hamad Al Badeih AlSahli
Anti-Vitiligo Association	Nawaf AlNoumas AbuAbdulrahman – Chairman
Kuwait Trade Union Federation	Ahmad Oqla AlAnzi
The Internet of Things Association (Under Proclamation)	Saqar Mefreh AlHarbi
Kuwait Workers Association	Fayez Al Sultani
Kuwait Association for Occupational Health and Safety	Dr. Manal Bu Haimed
Kuwaiti Association for Crisis and Disaster Management	Idris Ibrahim Al Kandari
Bayader Al Salam Women Association	Dalal Abdullah Ghanem Al Othman – Chairman
Kuwait Association for Protecting Public Funds	Saleh Hussain Al Ajmi
Date Palm Friends Society	Dr. Adel Hassan Dashti
Kuwait Society for the Follow up and Evaluation of Parliamentary Performance	Nasser Al Shulaimi
Sustainable Development Center of Bar Association	Lawyer / Abdullah AlDhayan AlAnzi – Chairman of the Center
Social Reform Society (SRS)	Dr. Khalid Mazkour Al-Mazkour



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