



**Bahrain  
Parliamentary Group**

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**The joint meeting of the Standing Committee on Sustainable  
Development and the Standing Committee on United  
Nations Affairs**

**Discussion on the Assembly General Topic  
Overcoming the Pandemic Today and Building a Better  
Tomorrow: The Role of Parliaments**

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

- The year 2020 was expected to mark the beginning of a "decade of action and implementation for sustainable development", during which the speed and scope of achieving its seventeen goals would be increased. But the unprecedented outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the disastrous effects it had caused around the world, made the achievement of these goals more difficult ... to the extent that they have made them more urgent and necessary than ever before, given the economic, social and humanitarian impacts of the pandemic that have eroded the efforts exerted nationally and internationally to achieve the sustainable development goals.
- Most governments will not be able to reverse this impact alone, which requires the international community to unify its efforts and mobilize its resources to achieve the goals of sustainable development. Therefore, measures to recover from the pandemic must come within a comprehensive set of policies and strategies that multiply efforts to confront and recover from the pandemic at the same time, putting the wheel of sustainable development back on the right track. Parliaments, with their unique competence to legislate and oversee the actions of the legislative authority, can be at the heart of this recovery process, and play a partner, influential and effective role within it.

- In the process of reviewing and adopting pandemic recovery policies, parliaments should aim to reverse the negative impact of the pandemic on the health, education, and income levels; most countries, rich and poor alike, have witnessed a significant decline in basic human development, the largest decline ever recorded, including a rise in the number of people suffering from food insecurity and inequality. Then came the pandemic, and the international community found itself faced with parallel threats related to health, economic and social crises that left the world in recession, and with the start of recovery policies, work must be done in parallel on more than one of the sustainable development paths to compensate for the losses and damages caused by the pandemic, with a sustainable and comprehensive approach that takes into account the needs of the most vulnerable and vulnerable groups in society.
- Basically, recovery policies should aim in particular to reverse the negative effects of the pandemic, especially in the most urgent and important areas, which are considered to have a multiplied effect that is reflected on the rest of the development paths: raising employment rates and creating job opportunities through financial and economic stimulus packages, with an emphasis on being that such packages have sustainable transformative implications.

Focusing in particular on the areas of sustainable and environmentally friendly production and the green and circular economy; Increasing growth rates and increasing international trade, and the fight against poverty and the development of sustainable programs for this purpose is not only providing assistance to the poor, but rather works to empower them by helping them out of poverty.

- These are all issues on which parliaments must have a fundamental role; whether in connection with setting the necessary legislative frameworks or approving the required government policies, as well as monitoring government performance, adopting the required financial allocations and monitoring its spending. This is what the legislature has already done in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which approved the financial and economic stimulus package, put in place by the Kingdom's government, with an amount exceeding \$ 11 billion; It aimed to contain the economic and social impacts of the pandemic, support the most affected sectors, revive the economy and ensure continued employment.
- Prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2.1 billion people were classified as global poor, and 767 million people lived in extreme poverty. It is estimated that by 2030, more than 100 million people will be pushed into poverty due to Covid-19 and climate

change, which requires the concerted efforts of the international community in the framework of its quest for a sustainable and effective recovery from Covid-19 to make among its goals the eradication of poverty. In all its forms everywhere and accelerate global action for a world without poverty.

- In the field of education, access to the Internet helps in a more equitable manner than closing the current gaps in education, not only between countries, but also within countries themselves considering that no country is without inequalities. The pandemic has revealed that digital coverage is indispensable for achieving a sustainable and inclusive recovery that contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. It was also an active and influential pivot in almost every aspect of an effective response to the pandemic, especially online learning, e-commerce, and homework. Therefore, bridging the digital divide between countries and within countries themselves, and thus promoting digital equality, must be a fundamental goal among the goals of the pandemic recovery policies, in a way that contributes to achieving the sustainable development goals, and leaves no one behind, which requires international cooperation to bridge the digital divide and build confidence and cybersecurity; Agreement on a new global architecture for digital cooperation. The Kingdom of Bahrain has

been a pioneer and spearheaded the subject of digital transformation, and that is why it did not face any obstacles in the generalization of digitization, whether in work from home or distance education, especially with the project of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa for future schools; so the educational process was organized despite the pandemic, without delay or slackening.