

Statement

By

The Secretary-General

On the occasion of the

Presentation of the 2006 Special Citation of the Habitat Scroll of Honour to H. H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Your Excellency Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis, President of ECOSOC,
Your Excellency Mrs Micheline Calmy-Ray, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs,
Your Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain,
Your Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the General Assembly,
Mrs Anna Tibajuka, Director General of the United Nations Office in Nairobi and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased and honoured to participate in this ceremony to present the 2006 Special Citation of the Habitat Scroll of Honour to H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for his impressive efforts in uplifting the living standards of all Bahrainis through a concerted focus on poverty alleviation and modernization while preserving the cultural heritage of his country.

We are gathered here today in recognition of the efforts made by the Kingdom of Bahrain under your Highness' able leadership in reducing poverty and social exclusion by facilitating the provision of housing to the poor and the disadvantaged. I highly commend your efforts to place the urban poor at the centre of the modernization strategy for the Kingdom of Bahrain. Your efforts over the last quarter of a century have helped to lift the Kingdom of Bahrain from what was largely a collection of rural villages into a thriving and diversified economy in which the poorer elements of society have not been left behind. It is inspiring to see that this has been done while providing social welfare support and focusing on educational opportunities and jobs for all.

I greatly value your commitment, Mr. Prime Minister, to participatory urban governance and for having introduced directly-elected municipal councils and promoting citizen participation in decision making for the planning and management of cities in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The nomination for the Special Citation of the Habitat Scroll of Honour is decided on the basis of an extensive assessment about the manner in which an individual's actions and decisions have had a profoundly uplifting effect on the welfare of his or her country's people. Tremendous progress has been made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals with social, economic and environmental problems recognized and effective policies have been adopted to address them in a sustainable manner. In this sense, the Kingdom of Bahrain has been exemplary in its efforts to alleviate poverty while also tackling its root causes. I am confident that this distinguished achievement would inspire other countries in the region and beyond to benefit from the experience of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

It is therefore my pleasure and honour to present to your Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa this prestigious award, the 2006 Special Citation of the UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honour.

Mr. Prime Minister, please accept my congratulations on behalf of yourself and your people.