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It is indeed a historic day for peaceful coexistence in Bahrain, the region and even the whole world, the day on which His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued the Royal Order for the establishment of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Co-existence. It came at a time when the world needs to contribute to achieve international solidarity and cohesion among all to overcome the problems and crises as well as provide a constructive model in promoting peaceful coexistence and tolerance among different religions and sects.

Bahrain has always been and will remain a Kingdom based on peace, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and respect for political, civil, cultural and social rights and freedoms. At the heart of this is the freedom of thought and belief in a framework of cultural and ethnic diversity stemming from its long history and the characteristics of its civilized people as the most peaceful people of this land of peace, tolerance and acceptance of each other in the context of mutual respect. Therefore, the Kingdom of Bahrain has risen to the ranks of developed countries in respect for human dignity.

Therefore, this supreme order came to constitute the culmination of a great legacy and honorable history as well as a leading role characterizing the Kingdom of Bahrain since the establishment of a modern civil state with its Arab and Islamic identity in the era of the founding father Ahmed Al Fateh in 1783. It is also an important addition His Majesty the King’s series of initiatives at the global level in the field of dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions.

His Majesty the King has adopted numerous initiatives to promote dialogue among religions, civilizations and cultures. The most important of these are organizing international conferences, launching a global document to promote religious freedom and peaceful coexistence, and setting up a chair for studies of dialogue, peace and interfaith coexistence at a prestigious Italian university. This is in addition to supporting the efforts of the United Nations and its agencies to serve humanity, support sustainable development and empower women and youth. His Majesty truly deserved the title of King of Peace from the prestigious publication Al Ahram Al Arabi, the 2016 UNIDO Prize, the Coexistence between Religions and Civilizations awards, Lifetime Achievement Award and the Samuel Zwemer award from American and international organizations and institutions, among other world honors. These were in recognition of His Majesty the King’s tireless efforts in this humanitarian field, which is beneficial to all humankind.

The establishment of the King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence is another step to strengthen the role of the Kingdom of Bahrain and its international standing as a global center for promoting a culture of peace, openness and coexistence among different cultures. This is in addition to spreading the values and principles of brotherhood, friendship, respect and human rapprochement through seminars, conferences and programs in various local, regional and international forums. It is a noble message with noble goals that the Center will strive to achieve, including its council of experts as well as scientific and professional expertise capable of highlighting the Bahraini model as a source of inspiration for the world in freedoms and respect for religious, intellectual and cultural pluralism.
Manama, March 14: His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, hailed the military cooperation and alliance between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United States, which contribute to preserving security and stability in the Middle East as well as combatting terrorism.

While receiving the US Secretary of Defense, James N. Mattis, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince discussed issues regarding military and defense cooperation and highlighted the long-standing ties between Bahrain and the US, reinforced by the joint commitment of His Majesty King Hamad and President Donald Trump to further advance cooperation across a range of areas and sectors.
Manama, 19 March: His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has affirmed that the establishment of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence crowns the pioneering role of the Kingdom of Bahrain in promoting the values of coexistence and tolerance and enhancing dialogue among different cultures and religions throughout history.

This came when His Majesty the King received at the Safiyah Palace the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence, Dr. Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Daij Al-Khalifa, Secretary-General Dana Khamis Al Zayani, and other board members on the occasion of the issued royal order to establish the board and appoint its members.

His Majesty congratulated them all on their assignments, commending their competence and contribution to clarifying Bahrain’s firm stance to protect religious liberties and respect intellectual and cultural diversity. His Majesty further affirmed that the Centre would consolidate Bahrain’s international standing as a global hub for hosting conferences and lectures aimed at promoting the culture of peace, openness and coexistence among different cultures.

He hoped the Centre would become a source of inspiration for other nations and people given that the Kingdom of Bahrain and its people represent a successful role model worth emulating for promoting friendship, mutual respect and rapprochement.

His Majesty wished the Chairman and members of the Board success to meet the center’s mission and noble goals. In his turn, Dr. Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Daij Al-Khalifa, extended his sincere thanks and appreciation to His Majesty the King for his trust and directives which would empower the center to carry out its duties.
Cairo, March 7-8: The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, affirmed that the strong Bahraini-Egyptian relations are based on a long history of strategic partnership and cooperation regarding regional and international issues. He also expressed the Kingdom of Bahrain’s appreciation for the Egyptian supportive stances towards Bahrain’s security and stability.

This came during the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Cairo during which he delivered a verbal message from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to the President of the Republic of Egypt, Abulfatah Al-Sisi, regarding the growing brotherly relations between the two countries and people. The Minister also met with his Egyptian counterpart, Sameh Shukry, and participated in the 149th Ordinary Session of the Arab League Council at the Ministerial Level, the 7th meeting for the Arab Ministerial Quartet Committee to follow up the developments of the crisis with Iran, and the meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Arab Peace Initiative.

The Kingdom of Bahrain submitted a report on the terrorist Iranian acts including supporting terrorism and training terrorist as well as smuggling weapons and promoting sectarian hatred to destabilize the region. The meetings have resulted in several resolutions that denounced such acts and hailed the role of the Bahraini and Saudi security bodies in thwarting a number of them and arresting members of these terrorist organizations which are supported by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and Hezbollah.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs also signed the Statute of the Arab Court for Human Rights along with Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Aboul Gheit. The Minister affirmed that establishing the Court, upon the initiative of His Majesty the King and the approval of the Arab League, reflects the keenness of His Majesty to promote human rights, freedoms and guarantees.
Inaugurating the new premises of Embassy of Kingdom of Bahrain in the United Arab Emirates

Minister of Foreign Affairs: Historic brotherly relations between Bahrain and UAE

Abu Dhabi, March 19: The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, affirmed that the firm historic brotherly ties between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates span centuries of deep-rooted relations.

The solid foundations of these ties have been laid by the early leaders and fathers, and were continued by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and his brother the President of the United Arab Emirates, Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, he added.

This came as Shaikh Khalid, along with his brother the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, Shaikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, inaugurated the new premises of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Abu Dhabi, in the presence of Royals, ministers, senior members and Ministry of Foreign affairs officials from both countries and heads of diplomatic missions in the United Arab Emirates.

On the occasion, the Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed his thanks and appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier, for their unlimited support to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and directives for the benefit of citizens, aimed at providing the best services in the country and abroad.

He affirmed that the ministry will continue its policy and implement its plans to establish embassies of the Kingdom of Bahrain abroad, to remain an honorable image that reflects the Kingdom of Bahrain-s development in various fields and enhances its position at regional and international levels.

He also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the United Arab Emirates for its care, keenness and for facilitating all matters to enable the embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to carry out all of its duties.

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Abu Dhabi, Mohammed bin Hamad Al Moawda, affirmed in his speech that the opening reflects the strong and outstanding ties between the two countries and their peoples.

He said that this achievement that the Kingdom of Bahrain had planned and sought was thanks to the convergence of visions between the two countries, adding that a new consulate building will soon be built in Dubai.

He also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the United Arab Emirates for supporting the Embassy and facilitating its job.

During the opening ceremony of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Arab Emirates, a documentary was screened, entitled “Bahrain and the UAE deep-rooted brotherly relations”. Participants in the ceremony also toured an exhibition showcasing historical photographs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.
as well as in the diplomatic field, political consultation, environment, transportation and double taxation.

On the economic front, the Royal directives resulted in the activation and intensification of economic and investment cooperation with Egypt on the high level of trade exchange between the two countries to about 150 million dollars.

Imports from Egypt include food, clothing and sanitary ware, while the Kingdom of Bahrain exports to Egypt aluminum, petrochemicals, pipes and others. Bahraini investments in Egypt reached about two billion dollars. Whereas the Bahraini-Egyptian Business Council has a promising role to expand cooperation between the private sectors in both countries.

At the military level, the joint annual exercise «Hamad» has been implemented since April 2015, as well as joint air training activities «Interlink». The youth exchange programs, benefiting from the experiences related to the development of sports facilities, are witnessing a significant and increasing activity. This is in addition to cooperation between the Supreme Council for Women and the National Council for Women in Egypt as well as the fields of culture, information, energy, tourism, banking and parliamentary affairs. These cooperation fields have resulted to a further deep and close bilateral partnership.

I would like to acknowledge the active and influential role played by the Royal Charity Organization under the directives of His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Organization, in supporting the relations between the two countries, in light of the noble and pioneering projects in Egypt, especially in the fields of health and education, and in cooperation with the House of Zakat and charity of the Imam Al-Azhar.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate the brotherly Egyptian people on holding the presidential elections in a democratic atmosphere, characterized by transparency and integrity, in accordance with international standards. As well as the impressive results achieved by the Egyptian army to defeat terrorism on all axes in the comprehensive process, «Sinai 2018».

What services does the Embassy offer for the Bahraini community in Cairo?
The number of Bahrainis residing in Egypt varies. There are students in Egyptian universities and there are large numbers of tourists visiting Egypt during vacations and summer. Furthermore, there are also businessmen as well as official, parliamentary and popular delegations who visit Cairo for various reasons.

The Embassy is keen on taking care of the affairs and interests of members of the community continuously, following up their situations to the fullest, and providing the needed channels to communicate with them, as well as resolving any obstacles during their stay.

In this regard, I would like to refer to the Embassy’s interest in completing Bahrainis’ transactions with the necessary speed and excellent service, in addition to looking after them in times of emergency, on the hour, in coordination with the relevant Egyptian authorities. The Embassy exerts special efforts to reach out to Bahraini students residing in Egypt. The opening of the new headquarter for Bahrain Students Club in Cairo was a crucial step in uniting the students and identifying their needs. In addition, the Embassy has also launched an “interactive platform” for news, events and joint projects between Bahrain and Egypt, supported with pictures on the Embassy’s website, which is updated on a daily basis to enhance the communication with the relevant authorities.

How does the Ambassador spend his day in Egypt? What are your most memorable memories there?
Cairo is known to be a capital that never sleeps, the events never stop, in addition to the meetings, conferences and different events hosted by Egypt throughout the year. Moreover, Cairo is also where the Headquarter of the Arab League is, which gives the Ambassador and the Embassy many responsibilities and duties.

During my term here, many changes and shifts occurred in Egypt, which resulted in numerous situations and unforgettable memories. The most important out of these, is the pride and gratitude I feel from this brotherly country, its leadership and government, towards the stances of the Kingdom of Bahrain, under the leadership of His Majesty the King. This appreciation is an extension of the tremendous achievements and qualitative gains that the Kingdom of Bahrain has seen, thanks to the comprehensive reform project, foremost of which is the consolidation of the rule of law and institutions, promoting the democratic process and freedoms. This is in addition to the integration of women and the progress of human development, which have reached further advanced levels.
The relations between Bahrain and Egypt are always characterized by strong historical relations. These relations have been manifested in many positions witnessed by the two brotherly countries in the past and recently. These relations are also a source of pride for Bahrainis and Egyptians alike, which is evident in every visit to the leadership of the two wise countries, and their similar positions in all circumstances, and is mirrored through relations of close cooperation in all fields and at various levels between the two brotherly countries.

The Diplomatic Gazette met the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the Arab Republic of Egypt, Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, who spoke highly about the close relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Arab Republic of Egypt, the future of these prosperous relations, and how Egypt is of great importance to Bahrain and all the Arabs. He also touched on the fields of cooperation between the two brotherly countries and the services offered by the Embassy to the citizens of the Kingdom in Cairo and other matters.

Relations between Bahrain and Egypt are historically strong. How do you view the progress and future of these relations? The relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Arab Republic of Egypt are certainly historical and strategic relations. It is an evolving relationship that reflects the common values that we share. This relationship is in a constant development at all levels, thanks to the keenness and vision of His Majesty the King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and his brother, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

The visits and contacts between the two leaderships are continuous because of these close relations, which reflect a mutual desire to consolidate joint cooperation and translate high-level political relations into projects and investments that benefit the peoples of the two brotherly countries.

The bilateral relations can be seen as an advanced model for the distinguished relations between brothers. The Kingdom has proved its unwavering stances and support of the Arab Republic of Egypt in its efforts to combat terrorism, protect its security and stability, and pursue economic reform. His Majesty the King was keen to accept the invitation of the Egyptian President, to attend the opening ceremony of the new Suez Canal and the Egypt Economic Conference. Egypt has strategic Arabic roots and a strong Egyptian nation results in the strength of all Arabs. The Arab Republic of Egypt’s stance on the security of the Gulf region and the cessation of interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the region is clear and responsible.

As Ambassador of my country, I have endeavored from the very first day to invest all these positive factors to expand bilateral cooperation and bring it to new and diverse heights. In recent years, the relations between the two countries have witnessed a qualitative leap forward and important developments, which is a source of happiness and satisfaction. The future also holds many promising opportunities in all fields, especially under the Bahraini-Egyptian Joint Committee, which is highly valued by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa. There is also a common consensus on following-up the cooperation agreements reached and the elimination of any obstacles facing the movement of trade and intraregional investments, reflecting the strength of the established relations between the two brotherly countries.

What are the areas of cooperation between Bahrain and Egypt? There is no doubt that the areas of cooperation between the two countries are varied on many levels. There are identical political visions towards regional issues, the need to protect Arab national security and to meet the challenges that exist within the unity of purpose and destiny.

His Majesty the King’s visit to Cairo in April 2016 witnessed the signing of 19 agreements and MoUs for cooperation in various fields including defense, youth and sports, media and tourism,
freedoms, as well as the civilized coexistence within the tolerant and peaceful Bahraini community and in a framework of justice, equality, mutual respect and adherence to the national unity which remains intact of the impurities of the aberrant minds and subversive ideologies. Furthermore, the Kingdom of Bahrain strengthened its presence in its regional and international surroundings as a fertile environment for the success of dialogues and exchange of ideas that could render services to humanity.

In addition, the Kingdom has left its fingerprint not only in the field of interfaith dialogue, but also on all political and cultural levels, and has provided effective solutions for several regional issues, thanks to the initiatives of His Majesty the King and the wise government. These initiatives are embodied in hosting conferences such as the Islamic-Christian Dialogue Conference in 2002, Solidarity among Islamic Schools 2003, Dialogue between Civilizations and Religions 2014, the Manama Dialogue since 2004.

This is in addition to the inauguration of “His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa’s studies chair for dialogue, peace, and coexistence among religions” in Italy in 2016, the “Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration” in 2017 and peaceful coexistence and religious tolerance all over the world.

His Majesty the King affirmed those historical Bahraini values and principals in his participation in the United Nations General Assembly’s High-Level Meeting on Dialogue between Religions and Cultures at the UN headquarter in 2008. He said: “the diversity of religions and creeds should be a source of dialogue to shield humanity against conflicts and disputes”. In addition to his recent article in Washington Post where he called on the world to look at the beauty of human diversity. His Majesty further added that given the peaceful coexistence based on the authentic principals of mutual respect and love, Bahrain has been recognized as a beacon for religious tolerance in the Arab world, and its belief that “religious diversity is a blessing for people. In our societies, we welcome Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Evangelism. We are also proud that our Hindu nationals can worship in a 200 years old temple complete with their images, just around the corner from the Sikh temple and the Muslim mosques.”

The spirit of love and affection was and will always be evident among the Bahraini people despite their differences, thanks to Bahrain’s long history of openness and the acceptance and respect of the other. It is also attributable to the vision of His Majesty the King, supported by HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier. Added to all these are the awareness of the citizens and their belief in religions’ messages, call for love and peace and renunciation of hatred based on racial, religious or ethnic considerations.

It is with no doubt that the establishment of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence in March 18, at the initiative of His Majesty the King, will be a great boost for the outstanding Bahraini efforts in promoting the culture of dialogue and peaceful coexistence among religions, civilizations and cultures at the various local, regional and international levels in order for Bahrain to remain a home for different cultures and religions and truly reflecting an amazing picture of love, tolerance and peace.
Achievements

Kingdom of Bahrain: a beacon for tolerance and coexistence among cultures and religions

The kingdom of Bahrain embodies a unique historic model of religious tolerance, recognition of the other, peaceful and civilized coexistence with different nationalities, religions and cultures, given its historical and moral heritage and the reform project of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and its legislative and constitutional reforms that promoted the values of peace, benevolence, justice and equality, all within the framework of respecting human's rights, their freedom and dignity.

The Bahraini society is right to feel proud of its civilized and enlightened image of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between all its components, regardless of their religion, ethnicity or culture, embracing Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Baha'is, Bohra and many others, all living in tolerance and practicing their religious rites with no restrictions or governmental interference, as ensured by the Constitution and the National Action Charter with respect for the freedom of belief.

Therefore, Bahrain has become a place where Mosques, Matams, Churches, Temples are erected together in a very small geographical space, in a spiritual ambiance of friendliness and mutual respect. Entitling it to be truly a home for tolerance and coexistence among cultures and religions.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has already proved through its history and within the framework of the reform project of His Majesty the King that the prevailing ethics of tolerance in the cultural heritage of Bahrainis were and still are major factors of progress and stability along with the comprehensive development process, political stability, economic prosperity and cultural and intellectual advancement. These ethics are also essential elements in the establishment of security, safety and social peace. This religious, sectarian and cultural diversity is a source of enrichment for this country, within the framework of the adherence of its citizens to the values and principals of good citizenship and in the framework of equal rights and duties before the law, as well as their recognition of the culture of dialogue, coexistence, and respect for the other as the main pillars of stability and social progress.

His Majesty the King has been keen, since the establishment of the National Action Charter with the approval of %98.4 of the citizens in the year 2001 and the launch of his reform project. It was aimed to embed these values and principals within a general framework of freedom of opinion, expression, thought and belief as well as reinforcement of moderation and spreading the values of peace, justice, coexistence.

All of this is reflected in the prosperity of the atmosphere of religious, civil, and democratic
In 2017, the Kingdom of Bahrain launched the National Human Development Report under the umbrella of the Global Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program.

A working group was formed which includes the Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (“Derasat”), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Information and e-Government Authority and the local office of the United Nations Development Program, with the support of Tamkeen.

The Working Group selected “Sustainable Economic Growth” to be the topic of the report, which seeks to highlight the human development achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain over the last 15 years and the goals it aims to achieve in the upcoming period and the nature of the challenges it expects.

The project contributes to Bahrain’s plan to diversify its economy as the final report is a highly elaborated analysis of the economy’s current capacities and the available opportunities to enhance them.

In order to complete the report, the report writers are holding a long series of bilateral and group meetings with stakeholders in relevant sectors and organizations in Bahrain to address the challenges that hinder the process of economic diversification.

The Information and e-Government Authority is supporting the process by providing the team with accurate and information from official sources in a way that meets international standards.

For example, the team members have visited the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism to delve into how the role of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Bahraini economy could be enhanced.

They have also visited the Ministry of Education to learn about the Kingdom’s education efforts which play a pivotal role in creating a knowledge-based economy.

On the sidelines of these activities, Derasat, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), organized a number of workshops on economic diversification, with the participation of wide range of stakeholders, the fact that helped the report authors diagnose the problems facing Bahrain economy.

The working team plans to publish the report during the second half of 2018 to contribute to the government’s upcoming action plan and also to mark the 10th Anniversary since the launch of the Kingdom of Bahrain’s Economic Vision 2030.
Opinions

Dr. Ebrahim Ali Badawi Al Shaikh

The initiative of His Majesty the King of Bahrain to establish the Arab Court for Human Rights

On March 7, 2018, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, signed the Statute of the Arab Court for Human Rights, which was established within the Arab League on the initiative of His Majesty the King in 2011.

His Majesty invited the Arab States to establish the Court in order to provide a judicial mechanism to support the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which was approved by the League in 2004 but did not include such a mechanism.

On 25 and 26 February 2013, the Kingdom hosted a conference to discuss the establishment of the Court. The Arab Summit agreed, in March 2013, during the Conference to establish the Court and recommended that a high-level committee of legal experts of Arab States draft the Statute of the Court. The Committee prepared this draft and presented it to the Council of the League, which approved it on 7 September 2014.

The Statute of the Court provides for the establishment of the Court as an independent Arab judicial body within the framework of the League of Arab States. A State party to a regime whose national is alleged to be a victim of a human right violation, enshrined in the Arab Charter on Human Rights or any Arab Convention on Human Rights, recourse to the Court provided that the complainant State and the State complained of are a party to the Statute.

States Parties may accept that one or more national non-governmental organizations accredited and working in the field of human rights in the same State of which a national is alleged to be a victim of a violation of a human right to resort to the Court, and the Court may issue advisory opinions on any legal matter related to the Charter or an Arab Convention relating to human rights, and the Court may issue advisory opinions on any legal matter related to the Charter or an Arab Convention relating to human rights and rules of Justice.

The Statute provides that it enters into force upon the ratification of seven member-states of the Arab League. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was the first State to ratify the Statute of the Court. This would encourage others to ratify it to enter into force and to allow the Court to exercise its functions and open up good prospects for the success of the ongoing efforts in the Arab League to develop the joint Arab system of action in the field of human rights.

Legal Consultant - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
You can’t resist the incredible feeling of a freefall in one of the tallest wind tunnels in the world; with an overall height of 12 meters, constructed with tempered glass. Jump in just like you would from an aircraft, but without a parachute, and even without boarding an airplane in the first place! Everyone can enjoy this bodyflight experience, except for those reluctant to go on a life-changing adventure. We can guarantee you the thrill of an extraordinary and unforgettable experience.

*Source: Bahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority

Events

Happy International Women's Day
8 March