



Speech of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq

May God protect him

14th November 2023



In the Name of Allah, the most Merciful, the Most Gracious

“Our Lord! bestow on us Mercy from Thyself, and dispose of our affair for us in the right way!”

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and may peace and blessings be upon the most noble of prophets, our guide, Prophet Muhammad, and upon all his Family and his companions.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

Today, we convene to inaugurate the first annual session of the 8th term of the Council of Oman. We commence with profound gratitude and praise to Allah the Almighty for His bounteous gifts bestowed upon our beloved country—gifts of peace, stability, and prosperity. We earnestly solicit His grace for continued progress and development for our homeland, aspiring for a future that is even more luminous and prosperous.

In the initiation of our current assembly, we extend our profound gratitude for the unwavering dedication and significant initiatives undertaken by the esteemed members of the Council of Oman during preceding sessions. We commend the Council’ s evolving maturity and its cohesive integration with the other esteemed institutions of the State, a collaboration that fortifies the effectiveness of our collective national endeavors. It is our earnest desire to ensure that such national efforts receive augmented focus and support, thereby enabling us to accomplish our established goals and fulfill our vision of prosperity for all our citizens.

We seize this moment to extend a cordial welcome to the members of the State Council, selected by us from among the most distinguished experts in our nation. In a similar vein, we greet the members of the Shura Council, elected by our citizens through the utilization of advanced electronic voting technology.

The Council of Oman represents an indispensable partner within the structural framework of our State. This partnership confers upon you



a weighty responsibility. We urge you to uphold this duty with the utmost integrity, championing the interests of our country, guided by the principles set forth in the Basic Law of the State and the regulatory statutes that govern your responsibilities, along with the authorities granted to you by the Law of the Council of Oman. With the confidence we have vested in you, we anticipate that your endeavors will significantly contribute to the ongoing progress and development, integral to the prosperous renaissance of our nation.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

The citizens of Oman have rendered an indispensable contribution to the continuous achievements witnessed during the past four years of the nation's comprehensive development. Their endeavors have been effectively fortified by the steadfast commitment of various state institutions, assiduously implementing the strategies that have been meticulously devised. These strategies are propelled by a vision emphatically prioritizing the enhancement of social sectors and the preservation of the aBy the grace and guidance of Allah the Almighty, our country has successfully attained notable results and significant accomplishments across social and economic sectors, as well as in fiscal performance, in spite of the global economic challenges. These challenges have notably impacted our economy and national programs. Our plans, intricately crafted with specific objectives, strive to address the exigencies of the present and aim for sustainable development through efficacious resource management, ultimately seeking to diminish public debt burdens. A portion of our fiscal surplus has been judiciously allocated to invigorate social sectors and stimulate economic growth advancements secured hitherto.

The implementation of our Fiscal Sustainability Plan has profoundly and positively influenced the consolidation of the country's financial standing and augmented the efficiency of our spending. The national programs initiated have been instrumental in bolstering economic growth and catalyzing investments in burgeoning sectors. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to continuing our efforts to diversify the sources of national



income, emphasizing the enhancement of non-oil revenues, to ensure the long-term stability of the State's public finances. Simultaneously, we envisage that the Social Protection System, recently introduced, will be comprehensive, extending its benefits to all segments of society, thereby guaranteeing a dignified life for all. Our dedication remains steadfast in sparing no effort to achieve the objectives and aspirations delineated in Oman Vision 2040.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

The restructuring of the State's Administrative Apparatus has been pivotal in augmenting the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations. We have meticulously implemented systems designed to optimize the decision-making process and to conduct rigorous evaluations of institutional performance. We remain dedicated to rigorously overseeing the implementation of endorsed principles for procedural streamlining, with the objective of integrating these principles as a prominent aspect of governmental performance.

Recognizing the judiciary as an integral component of the State's framework, we are committed to advancing the judicial system and fortifying it with skilled professionals. We pledge our steadfast focus to the judiciary, enabling it to administer justice with unparalleled competence.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

By the grace of Allah, our national endeavors have catalyzed the continuous development of the health, education, and service sectors, which have been diligently expanded in proportion to our population's growth. We have focused on implementing well-conceived initiatives in these sectors, grounded in realistic, thoroughly researched strategies and plans, to ensure comprehensive and inclusive development. These enhancements have reached every governorate and wilayat without exception.

Our emphasis on the development of the governorates and the reinforcement of the decentralization principle have been realized through



the enactment of the System of Governorates and the Law of Municipal Councils. This strategy aligns with our vision for locally administered governance based on decentralization principles. It also dovetails with our objectives to empower local communities in managing their affairs and actively participating in the nation-building process. We assert that the role of municipal councils transcends local municipal affairs; these bodies are vested with extensive powers, duties and a broad spectrum of tasks. We urge members of municipal councils to fully utilize the authority and resources at their disposal, innovating in ways that substantially enhance the well-being and welfare of our citizens.

Adhering to the principle of gradual progression in our policies and decisions, we remain committed to an ongoing evaluation of the outcomes anticipated from the policy of decentralization of the governorates. We are determined to continuously reassess and expand this approach, aiming to broaden its scope to encompass various sectors and multiple aspects. This endeavor is focused on significantly enhancing and strengthening the active participation and engagement of local communities in the developmental process, ensuring the local administration initiative is diligently pursued to achieve its specified objectives, thereby contributing effectively to our comprehensive journey of economic and social development.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

As we discern the challenges pervading our society and recognize their intolerable impacts on its ethical and cultural fabric, we underscore the imperative to assiduously address, scrutinize, and continuously monitor these issues. This endeavor is paramount to augment society's resilience in confronting them and to fortify our national identity and foundational values and principles. Furthermore, it is imperative to accord paramount attention to the family, the cornerstone of our society, which acts as a bulwark in safeguarding our progeny from harmful ideologies that are in direct opposition to the tenets of our venerable religion and core values. Such detrimental trends also conflict with our Omani traditions, which are deeply ingrained in our history and national character.



Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

Recognizing that educational institutions, research, and cultural centers at all levels constitute the foundation of our society’ s scientific and intellectual advancement, and act as drivers for our technological and industrial progression, we reaffirm our steadfast commitment to empowering the educational sector. This includes adapting academic curricula to meet the demands of economic development, broadening opportunities for our youth to engage in scientific expertise, and immersing themselves in the broad realms of science and knowledge. We encourage them to utilize their cognitive and intellectual abilities for creative and innovative endeavors, thereby laying a robust groundwork for authentic investment and establishing themselves as leaders in economic growth.

In light of rapid global advancements in frontier technologies and their applications, including artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential to amplify productivity and efficiency across myriad sectors, and with our profound recognition of the necessity to diversify sources of income through knowledge, technology, and innovation, we are resolutely intent on positioning the digital economy as a pivotal and central pillar of our national economy. We have promulgated directives to inaugurate a national program for the adoption and localization of AI and to expedite the establishment of legislations that will enable AI technologies to become an instrumental force in our developmental sectors.

Moreover, driven by our firm belief in addressing climate change’ s impacts and our commitment to sustainable, renewable energy, in line with the government’ s goal to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050—a target we endorse—we have directed efforts to expedite the development of the renewable energy sector. This encompasses the development of its legal and policy framework, the provision of incentives to encourage foreign investment and local industries, thereby fostering the domestic growth of this vital technology.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,



As we observe with profound concern the grave predicament of our brethren in the occupied Palestinian territories, enduring relentless Israeli aggression and an unjust siege, we reiterate our firm stance on the establishment of a Palestinian state, with Al Quds Al Sharqiyyah (East Jerusalem) as its capital. We vehemently urge the international community to fulfill its obligations and honor its commitments pertaining to the Palestinian cause. It is of utmost urgency that effective and fundamental solutions be expedited to actualize the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people in establishing their sovereign state, a cornerstone for the realization of lasting peace in our region and the security of the global community.

We reassert our firm political tenets, solidly anchored in the principles of good neighborliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of other sovereign nations. Our position is further rooted in a steadfast belief in the establishment of a just and equitable system for mutual benefit and exchange of interests, aimed at establishing solid foundations for stability and peace, and to make a positive contribution towards these noble objectives.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman,

In conclusion, we extend our profound gratitude and appreciation to the civil, military, and security sectors of the State for their steadfast dedication towards the success of our development initiatives and the realization of our national goals and aspirations. The preservation of these achievements would not have been feasible without the establishment of safety and security across our nation. The vigilance and dedication of our military and security forces have been vital in ensuring peace and safety in every corner of our land. We salute our valiant troops who stand guard in every location within our borders, safeguarding our homeland and securing our accomplishments. We highly commend the invaluable contributions of these services and all their personnel.

We implore Allah the Almighty to grant us success and guide us on the path



of righteousness. We pray for His continued grace to bestow bountiful blessings and prosperity upon the people of our country and all those residing within its territory, preserving its tranquility.

We extend our sincere wishes for continual prosperity to our beloved country and its loyal citizens, year after year.

May the peace and blessings of the Almighty be upon you all.

The convening was attended by members of the Royal Family, members of the Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Council, Chairman of the Shura Council, Commanders of the Sultan's Armed Forces and the Royal Oman Police, members of the State Council and Shura Council, heads of the diplomatic missions accredited to the Sultanate of Oman, undersecretaries, governors, members of the Supreme Judicial Council, some business persons, CEOs at Oman Investment Authority, editors-in-chief of local newspapers and representatives of the committees and professional associations.

May the Almighty Allah protect His Majesty the Sultan and guard him as a source of pride for his homeland and people!"