

Bahrain

Mohamed J. K. Al Ghatam

Minister of Education



Dr. Mohammed J. K. Alghatam has received a great number of certificates, degrees and diplomas in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, among them a B.Sc. (Trent University - Nottingham - United Kingdom), a M.Sc. (Research) and a Ph.D. from Loughborough University of Technology - United Kingdom, and a Master of Military Art and Science (Politics & Strategies) from the U.S Army Graduate Studies Department - Fort Leavenworth, U.S.A. He worked many years for industrial corporations and for the Bahrain Defence Force. From 1995-2001 he was President of the University of Bahrain. Since 2001 he has been Minister of Education. He is member and fellow of several professional institutions and associations worldwide, as well as of

governmental councils and commissions. He received a great number of awards and medals for military, academic and national achievements.

One world, one future

The new context we face in the new century is one of interdependence, the changing role of the state, and the power of the new communication and information technology. It is a context, which is fraught with asymmetries in a number of domains: power, knowledge, wealth and gender.

The inevitable consequences are: poverty, ignorance, marginalization, injustice and arrogance of power. All leading to frustration, violence and conflicts between and within nations. We live in a world that is still divided along ideological, religious and ethnic lines.

If we are genuinely interested in fusing these numerous worlds into one, or at least bridging the gap between them, we must act together to bring about the necessary change. Change from a culture of confrontation to a culture of cooperation, from a culture of war, to a culture of peace and inter-cultural dialogue.

By so doing we stand a better chance of knowing each other, forging new partnerships, creating new modalities for cooperation, and developing new approaches to sustainable development, which is about more than economic growth, as there is no sustainability without freedom of expression; without a sustainable democracy; and without trained human resources.

Here comes the crucial role that education has to play in inculcating in the minds of the younger generation new attitudes of openness, of interaction, of discussion, of persuasion, and above all, of global solidarity.

Education, pursued in the right context, can make a meaningful contribution to the change we are advocating, because education as rightly stated in the "Report of the International Commission on Education for the 21 century, "is well qualified to build the one world about which we dream because, while education is an ongoing process of improving knowledge and skills, it is also - perhaps primarily - an exceptional means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations".

The most formidable challenge we face as Ministers of Education is how to ensure that the systems we run are efficient, imaginative, creative and well equipped to respond effectively to our desire to create one peaceful world. Only through cooperation can such an ideal be realized. *✍*