SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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Sommario:

♦ Joint Press Release on the visit of His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, to Kuwait

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1. The State of Kuwait and the Holy See welcome the official visit of His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, which is taking place from 14 to 16 January 2026. During the visit, an official round of talks will be held with His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait.

2. This visit comes as part of the celebrations marking the proclamation of the Church of Our Lady of Arabia in Ahmadi, Kuwait, as a Minor Basilica. As the oldest Catholic church in the State of Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf region, this title was conferred by His Holiness Pope Leo XIV on 28 June 2025, in recognition of its historical and spiritual significance in the Arabian Gulf.

3. This historic designation–the first of its kind in the Arabian Peninsula–underscores the unique role of the Church of Our Lady of Arabia as the mother church of Kuwait, being the first Catholic church ever built in the country. The original chapel was constructed in 1948, and the present church was completed in 1957 as a generous gift of the local donors, whose care and support for the church complex continue to this day.

4. The State of Kuwait reaffirms its steadfast principles of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence among religions, which are values that are enshrined in its ideals from its inception and were later codified in its Constitution.

5. This is an occasion also to recall the historic visit paid by the late Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God rest his soul, to the Successor of Peter on 6 May 2010, which constituted an important milestone in the course of relations between the State of Kuwait and the Holy See. This visit took place as part of a series of high-level official exchanges, underscoring the Kuwaiti leadership’s commitment to strengthening communication and dialogue with the Holy See, having been preceded in 2009 by the visit of the former Prime Minister, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and followed in 2015 by the visit of the former Prime Minister, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, may God have mercy on him.

6. The solemn celebration of the proclamation of the Minor Basilica will take place in Ahmadi on Friday, 16 January 2026, at 10:00 a.m., and will be presided by His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

7. Furthermore, His Eminence's visit aims to strengthen the bonds of friendship and cooperation that the Holy See and the State of Kuwait have maintained since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1968, when Kuwait became the first country of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf to establish such relations with the Holy See. The visit also intends to bear witness to the longstanding tradition of religious coexistence that has consistently characterized the State of Kuwait within the Arabian Gulf.

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