

His Excellency Mr. Alastair Long, British Ambassador to Bahrain



As 2026 sharpens the realities of a multipolar world shaped by rapid technological change and climate pressures, the United Kingdom argues that diplomacy and a renewed commitment to rules-based cooperation are becoming more critical than ever to global stability. In conversation with Mahir Haneef, His Excellency Mr. Alastair Long, British Ambassador to Bahrain, outlines why responsible use of technology, sustained investment in human skills, and respect for international rules are essential to ensuring progress remains inclusive, sustainable, and shared.

The world is changing rapidly. I would cite three changes in particular. First, the most rapid advancement ever seen of in both technological development and access to that technology. Second, the continuing climatic changes to our planet with their destructive consequences. Third, the emergence of a multi-polar world. All three invite humanity to embrace the opportunity that they might present - tech enablement of inclusive and sustainable growth and prosperity - but come with major risks and challenges. Navigating these and trying to pick the pathways for human progress is the role of diplomacy.

In the UK - a top ten global economy, the global financial centre, and global leader in green transition - we would welcome a distributed global economy in which wealth, prosperity and opportunity is more evenly shared, but we continue to underline the essential need for a rules-based system to underpin that. It is no secret that this is under threat. People, mistakenly in my view, blame the institutions and rules devel-

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oped in the post war years, criticising the UN, WTO, Geneva Conventions etc. But those institutions are only as good as their members, treaties only effective if implemented. Were they to be removed we would need to reinvent them. They should be our guarantee that we never repeat the dark episodes of the past. They should enable every UN nation, regardless of size or strength, to live free of fear and thrive. A world in which growth and prosperity is more evenly spread and shared is within reach. The progress in eliminating poverty in the last few decades has been remarkable. But in 2026 we need to recommit to the rules.

My top tip (risky as this is) for 2026 is don't expect A.I. to take over but do start using it or you will be left behind. I expect it not to curtail human attainment but let us rise to new levels of endeavour, creativity, and collaboration. But we shouldn't lose the old skills. Perhaps it shows my age, but I still feel we need to invest in literacy, numeracy, and the arts. Not least for our mental wellbeing.



(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

Unified system

Parliament passes GCC land transport law to increase volume of trade exchange

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Parliament approved Decree-Law No. 35 of 2025 yesterday, bringing Bahrain into the GCC's unified system for international land transport and laying down how it will work in the Kingdom.

MP Ahmed Al Salloom backed the move in the chamber, saying: "We certainly support the decree-law, out of our desire for the Kingdom of Bahrain to meet its regional obligations and to put into effect what the GCC Supreme Council approved at its 43rd session, by adopting the unified system for international land transport as a mandatory framework."

He pressed for clearer detail on what it could deliver for commerce, telling ministers: "I would like to understand more about what opportunities this system will add in order to increase the volume of trade exchange."

Jobs

He also asked if it could "create job opportunities for citizens through the transport of goods and people between GCC states."

MP Jalal Kadhem said the change would reach beyond paperwork and into household incomes.

"The unified land transport law between GCC states affects



Image used for illustrative purposes only



"We certainly support the decree-law, out of our desire for the Kingdom of Bahrain to meet its regional obligations."

— MP AHMED AL SALLOOM



"The unified land transport law between GCC states affects a wide segment of Bahraini citizens and their families." - MP Ahmed Al Salloom

— MP JALAL KADHEM

and for rules that stop abuse on the ground.

The decree-law approves the Unified System (Law) for International Land Transport between GCC states, adopted by the GCC Supreme Council at its 43rd session.

Referral

A parliamentary committee reviewing the referral said the decree-law was sound under the Constitution and recommended it be passed.

The six-article decree-law adopts the attached unified system and defines the "competent authority" as the government body to be named by decree.

For the system's purposes, it sets the Bahraini dinar at ten Saudi riyals.

It also sets a way to appeal decisions issued under the system, its executive regulations, and decisions made under them.

Notification

Any affected party has 30 days from notification to file a grievance with the competent authority, either by registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt or by electronic means.

A decision must be issued within 30 days; if the grievance is rejected, reasons must be given, and if there is no reply it is treated as refused.

A further 30 days is allowed to challenge the refusal before the competent court.

Committee to look into employment vacancies and unemployment allowance

● MP Jalila to serve as head

TDT | Manama

The Council of Representatives has formed a parliamentary investigation committee to examine employment vacancies listed in the Ministry of Labour's records, as well as the procedures for closing job-seeker files and suspending the unemployment allowance.

The decision was approved during the Council's 12th ordinary session of the fourth annual term of the sixth legislative chapter, held on Tuesday, 30 December 2025.

The committee will be chaired by MP Jalila Alawi Al-Sayed, with MP Mahmoud Mirza Fardan serving as Deputy Chair.

Members include MPs Abdulwahid Abdulaziz Qarata, Munir Ibrahim Sarour, and Mohsen Ali Al-Asbol.

Mandate

The committee's mandate focuses on verifying the number of job vacancies recorded by the Ministry of Labour and the procedures taken to fill them.

It will also examine the Ministry's mechanisms for closing job-seeker files and the processes governing the suspension of the unemployment allowance.

Bahrain-Thailand relations



His Highness Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Advisor to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, received His Excellency Khalil Yaqoub Al Khayat, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the Kingdom of Thailand. HH Shaikh Ali commended the strong and steadily growing relations between the two Kingdoms, noting the continued development and cooperation across various domains. The Ambassador expressed his appreciation to HH Shaikh Ali, affirming his keenness to strengthen cooperation.