

Hashem S. Hashim



“Seek out the tough roads, for they lead to amazing destinations”.

A Glimpse

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) launched a major new company in 2016 namely, the Kuwait Integrated Petrochemical Industries Company (KIPIC). KIPIC, one of the two largest companies within KPC, will integrate, deliver and run three massive new projects at the Al-Zour complex. The

first of which will be a refinery, followed closely by a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) importing facility and finally a Petrochemicals plant. The investments will total 26 billion US dollars, uplifting Kuwait's position in the downstream sector and increasing the refining capacity to 1.4 million barrels per day.

It takes a special person with exceptional skills to lead such a huge endeavor. It is therefore not a surprise that Hashem Sayed Hashim was the one chosen to be the CEO of this new company, recognizing a leader with a track record of outstanding results in the face of adversity and complex situations throughout his career within Kuwait Oil Company. A leader who loves a challenge!

From 1987, when he started as a newly hired engineer in Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), he was a natural leader. From steering the development of a tough field like Umm Gudair having complex border issues with Wafra to a total revamp of the Reservoir Management Department, and the formation of a new Jurassic Gas development asset in North Kuwait, Hashem was single minded in his commitment to the overall company objectives.

He subsequently headed the South East Kuwait asset and revived the health of Burgan by almost doubling the reserves allowing a longer term strategy to be put in place for sustained production from the maturing giant field Burgan. Building Burgan to new heights of 1.7 million barrels of oil per day and creating sound plans to sustain it, was one of the highlights of his career.

This entailed turning water disposal enhancements into water injection projects for increasing oil production. Rejuvenating aging facilities, reviving the production system whilst planning new major projects to sustain the maturing production was not easy. However a leader achieves the impossible when the right people are engaged at the right time to tackle the right issues. His sharp focus on selecting the right people has been Hashem's trademark.

When he became the CEO of KOC, he steered the company to deliver 3.0 million barrels of oil per day for the first time in the recent history of Kuwait when he created the production optimization task force and engaged the company to align as one towards its delivery in 2015. And despite sceptics at the highest level in the country, he successfully engaged IOCs (International Oil Companies) to return and support KOC for the longer term both technically but also to coach and train the next cadre of capable people to run the company.

Today he is building KIPIC from nothing with a passion and energy of a youth and wisdom of a seasoned leader with a whole new chapter to write in the coming years.

- Graduated from Kuwait University in 1987, as a Chemical Engineer.
- 1987 joins Kuwait Oil Company, and works in Projects team, testing recovery processes for the Heavy oil in Ratqa oil field.
- 1996 Superintendent, Umm Gudair (WK asset).
- 1997 Superintendent, Burgan Field Development (SEK asset).
- 1998 Superintendent, Reservoir Management.
- 1999 Head of newly created Strategic Planning Team.
- 2000 Launches the first strategic plan: the “KOC 2020 Strategy”.
- 2002 Kuwait Project Lead—concept of Operating Service Agreement (OSA) was first created.
- 2003 Manager Field Developments South and East Kuwait (Burgan).
- 2006 Manager Jurassic Gas Development (Planning and Gas)—Initiated the first Gas Field Development in Kuwait and long term Gas Strategy.
- 2007 Deputy CEO Chief Executive Officer of South and East Kuwait (Burgan).
- 2009 SEK reaches the record production of 1.7 million barrels of oil per day, for the first time in the modern era of Kuwait.
- 2010 Signed first ETSA with IOC in Jurassic Gas.
- 2013 CEO of KOC Kuwait Oil Company. Also appointed as Chairman and Managing Director of The Kuwaiti Oil Tankers Company (KOTC).
- 2015 KOC achieves sustainable production of 3.0 million barrels of oil per day.
- 2016 KOC signs 3 major ETSA projects with two IOCs in SEK, NK Conventional and NK-Heavy Oil.
- 2016 CEO of KIPIC, Kuwait Integrated Petrochemical Industries Company.

A Personal Snapshot

The setting was amazing. The view from the 19th floor of the architecturally awarded magnificent KPC building made a perfect backdrop for this interview.

Hashem’s unassuming, calm and humble style was a stark contrast from his sharp wit and passion when he talked about the projects during his career. His eyes always lit up when discussing the people in his life and how his successes were really their achievements, their dedication and their sacrifices.

An Agent of Change

Early Stories

Where were you born?

I was born in Ahmadi, as my father worked at Kuwait Oil Company and Ahmadi is the oil city that was built near the Greater Burgan oil field. I was the first son after three daughters. We lived there for many years before moving on. But I returned to Ahmadi where my children also grew up surrounded by the oil Industry.

How did you choose to study Petroleum Engineering?

Actually there was no Petroleum Engineering Department at the time I started at Kuwait University. I began by studying Medicine.

Medicine! That's very different.

Yes, Medicine. I studied for one and a half years, mostly pushed by the wishes of my family, and expectations all around me. But in my heart I wanted to follow my father's footsteps and work in the oil industry. So, I finally changed to Chemical engineering, graduated in 1987 and joined KOC where I entered a program designed to obtain a diploma in petroleum engineering.

I started in a team testing a variety of recovery processes for the Heavy Oil in the Ratqa field. I was fascinated by the technical work and quickly got into coordinating the assessment of the results obtained by screening methods at a pilot scale.

In 1988, I was transferred to the South and East Asset, and was excited to work in the giant Burgan field as a Reservoir Engineer.

But the 1990 invasion of Kuwait interrupted my reservoir engineering career. KOC workforce was volunteered to several key industries of Kuwait crucial for the country's survival. It was an opportunity to serve the nation. I worked tirelessly in the manufacturing of bread, at the national mills industry. I was assessing how to optimize the processes, identifying the value chain, and detecting if there were opportunities to improve productivity or minimize costs. It was an eye opening experience.

Wow! I do recollect being told that Kuwaitis at that time proudly bought their national brand of bread from the "Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakery Company". They remember it with reverence as one of the factories that was sustained by regular citizens in a collective volunteering effort.

Absolutely true. It was a classic example of people coming together as an unwavering will of a nation to rebuild itself.

Were you already married or with a family at the time?

No I was single and stayed in Kuwait throughout the occupation and Liberation, in our family house.

Firefighting

Tell us about the experience towards the end of the invasion and the start of the reconstruction of the country?

As we all know the invasion ended with all our wells in Kuwait on fire. It was horrific and unimaginable. I was part of the wells firefighting team, supporting technically and informing the configuration of the wells, completion, depths etc.; providing all the information necessary to allow the wells to be controlled and the fires extinguished.

Almost immediately, we had the monumental task of returning the production back to normal. It was such a hectic period, with a high level of simultaneous activity in drilling, workover and reconnections all over the fields of Kuwait. Our country needed us to boost our production and capacity to meet 2 million barrels per day.

I resumed my role as a Reservoir Engineer with a difference. The experience of reviving our oil fields after destruction and devastation was truly unique. It was like 10 years of learning packed into one year. All of us at the time grew beyond our youthful years. And even after the last fire was put out, the stench in the air stayed with us for months whilst the ground pollution stayed for many years. We are still cleaning up some of the environmental damage 26 years on.

Once we restored the production to 2 million, KOC developed a longer-term strategy for growth, the first one in its entire history. We envisioned an aggressive target capacity of 3 million barrels of oil per day by 2010, preserving Burgan to be a swing producer and focusing on developing new and difficult areas first. We had large reserves which were yet to be exploited to secure the future of the country as a strong oil producer. We successfully reached that peak capacity in October 2010. The next challenge was to create a sustainable production at these levels by 2015 which was also achieved against many challenges from water handling and water injection projects.

Your commitment to your country is truly remarkable. Did you ever have the opportunity to work overseas?

Yes. I was assigned to work with BP in Aberdeen, on their offshore operations in the Miller field, North Sea. It was yet another diverse learning experience for me. I discovered the true value of integrated working.

I understood how a lean, profit focused company makes every decision by weighing costs against return on investment. And how these conversations were taking place across the whole company to ensure people were fully aligned to consider profitability in every action they take.

Transition from Extracting Oil in Easy Sands to Tougher Carbonates

As insights for the new generation, what can you tell us about your earlier journey that shaped your career?

When the company transferred me from Burgan Asset to West Kuwait Asset in 1995, it was a difficult move at first. I was too comfortable working with sandstones and knew very little about carbonates. As I was to learn, we never truly grow until we are thrown out of our comfort zone. I was only a young professional, but was presented with many issues that I volunteered to resolve. I put my hand up more than anybody else to take on difficult tasks. It wasn't long before my talents were recognized and I was promoted to be Superintendent of Fields Development for "Umm Gudair" carbonate oil field. One of the initiatives I led was to control the oil migration process which was losing reserves for KOC, with the "Line of Defense" concept that saved the company billions of dollars in future revenue.

I moved back to South and East Kuwait as Team Leader of a special initiative called "*Modelling of Burgan*". It was a huge modeling project of the subsurface, to be carried out in KOC with Chevron. The size of the model was mind blowing considering Burgan is the largest clastic reservoir in the world. Our second challenge was difficulty in enhancing production due to pressure decline in Wara, the second largest reservoir in Burgan. In order to implement the concept of water injection for Wara, we needed to pilot the concept quite quickly so as not to delay the first large scale injection project. The third challenge was to develop people's skills in how to manage our fields facing increased water cuts and with new demands on managing a massive waterflood project.

Looking back at these enormous challenges and how we tackled them, I can reflect that they were the start of a big change in the development direction of Burgan to create new value for the company.

In 1998 I was thrown into a completely different kind of challenge. Appointed as Team Leader of Reservoir Management, I observed that the department had too many functions, diluted across vastly different scopes and urgently in need of more focus and clarity in direction. I re-organized the

whole group sending IT-related material to a new team thus, launching the KOC Data Management department. Reservoir Management now has the companywide accountability to audit the necessary processes that guarantee the health of our reservoirs, share sound reservoir management practices to assure sustainable production for generations to come.

A Companywide Perspective

In 1999, a new team called Strategic Planning Team was established and I was appointed as the Head of the team. My assignment was to create the 2020 strategy for KOC and to develop the right processes and organization that will deliver it.

What a fantastic assignment!

Yes, the strategic planning experience early in my career truly provided the broadest perspective on how our company operates and delivers a sustainable future for the country's treasures.

What happened next?

In 2002, I was promoted to become the Technical Manager, for “*Kuwait Project*”. KOC observed that TSA Technical Services Agreements with International Oil Companies (IOCs) did not provide enough incentives or scope to develop both the national workforce and our oil fields effectively. A fresh look at the contractual structure was needed. The focus of “*Kuwait Project*” and my assignment was to develop a new model for collaboration with IOCs. I led a joint team across KOC, to develop a concept that would evolve into the Operating Services Agreements (OSAs) with IOCs.

After that, 2003 saw me moving back to South and East Kuwait (SEK) as a Manager of Field Development. We were at a critical stage of upgrading the gathering centers to prepare for the growth in production of 1.7 million of barrels of oil. I aligned all plans and activities and streamlined the pipeline of projects, avoiding much duplication.

I saved the company a few hundred million dollars by stopping new disposal plants and combining the disposal concept with an upcoming injection project. This opportunity for efficiency was not seen because of lack of integration across the group at the time. Even the Deputy Managing Director at the time found it difficult to handle the cancelling of this project. I stepped up to take responsibility for the change. Looking for integration and alignment in activities and plans across the whole asset became my theme.

A Major Step into Gas for KOC—A Tough Challenge for Me

What was the moment of significant change for you?

In 2006 KOC announced the discovery of commercial quantities of Jurassic Gas in North Kuwait. Creation of a new Gas Strategy and an aggressive plan to develop it landed on my lap as I was appointed Manager of Field Development of Jurassic. Being at the start of a new era in KOC's Gas strategy allowed me the opportunity to make this new project truly multi-disciplinary and fully integrated with the right people and teams to ensure success. Developing Deep Sour Gas was not the easiest way to start a new Gas Development Strategy in Kuwait. This was one of the toughest challenges I faced in my early to mid-life career.

Almost Doubled the Reserves of Greater Burgan

Greater Burgan is a major player in the world economy. What transformations happened after your return?

In 2007 I returned to SEK as Deputy Managing Director of the asset. My objective was to reduce project cycle-time for business critical upgrades. I directed a major facilities' upgrade and drilling program in Burgan Field including engineering modifications to 14 production Gathering Centers (GCs). This was accomplished within 3 years, whereas a typical KOC project cycle would have been 6 years, without any interruption to production whilst maintaining the highest standards of HSSE (Health, Safety, Security and the Environment).

Another major change was turning the Chevron-driven pattern waterflood concept in Wara to a lower risk peripheral waterflood. Another key step towards risk reduction was a phase one injection scheme that I initiated called Early Wara PMP. This project was an amazing example of people being engaged and fired-up to deliver excellence. The project delivered in a record breaking time of 6 months from sanction to injection start and the early learnings from the waterflood saved a few hundred million dollars in the main Wara PMP waterflood. I still recall the 6 months of buzz and the passion in the people who made it happen across all disciplines within and outside the asset including our service company partners. This record is yet to be broken for a similar size project in KOC. It truly helped me understand how much power is possible from people's untapped potential.

Another massive change that influenced our strategy for KOC, KPC and the country was the discovery of hidden potential in our giant reservoirs that

almost doubled the remaining reserves in Burgan in 2010. I guided the study that led to this discovery providing the challenge needed to extract an outstanding outcome. This set the scene for a whole new development strategy for Burgan where we created a Life of Field Strategy, the first in the history of Greater Burgan Field. The one that sparked similar life of field strategies to be put in place for all the fields in KOC. We also reached the target of demonstrating a producing capacity of 1.7 million barrels of oil per day in 2010. It was the first time Burgan produced this volume in the modern era of Kuwait.

I can see you are an agent of change....

Change for good reasons. There are many stories where I was simply the spark and a guiding light that removed barriers in the system and allowed my people to run unrestricted towards their goals. It is not enough to provide focus and clarity in direction, sometimes as leaders we need to intervene to remove obstacles to progress.

Ascension to CEO

Now, tell us about the moment you were called into become CEO of KOC. What did you feel at that time?

KOC's role in the oil sector is very challenging and difficult, in the current politically complex environment. Leading KOC in the 70s or 80s was different than it is today, as KOC's influence in the oil sector of Kuwait has undergone many changes.

When Sami Al-Rushaid wanted to step down, the KPC CEO called me to replace him as I was the only suitable leader at that time to take this position. I questioned my suitability as my focus has always been more on technical and business aspects of the company and less on responding to the frequently changing political environment in Kuwait. I stated my reservations, but there was no way out and I was appointed.

It was clear to me at that very moment that if my focus remained fully on expediting the technical and business objectives of the company, my tenure as a CEO of KOC may not be a long one. The beauty of our democracy is that change can be sudden and bring new people with fresh ideas to take up positions in government to drive a new agenda for the country. The downside is that if these changes are too frequent, it takes time to get the wheels in motion again to progress key investment decisions on projects.

Some investment programs can be deferred without consequences. However, in the upstream oil and gas sector, pace of decisions is critical to the

successful implementation of our long term production strategy and many projects are very time sensitive. To drive the pace of decisions required to avoid future gaps in oil production and to provide a sustainable income from the biggest revenue generator in our country, I would have to take personal risks. I decided I was willing to make that sacrifice.

What has been your biggest challenge so far?

I knew the CEO role would bring new and exciting opportunities to shape up the company with significant challenges along its journey. But I probably only grasped the real size of the responsibility when I had to lead not only the businesses associated with oil production growth, which were already extremely complex, but also those projects associated with numerous other supporting sectors.

Aside from mega investment projects in oil expansion needing urgent decisions, there were a multitude of other expansion projects in the pipeline that also needed clear direction to close out issues and progress. Projects like the new Ahmadi Hospital, expanding the marine capability, growing the Ahmadi Township, rapid expansions of Power stations, which require swift expansion in the fuel network to meet the increased demands on electricity consumption in Kuwait, to name just a few!

Protecting our heritage and pride in our Ahmadi township required attention to projects that restored the formal beauty of the place before the war. Small projects such as changing out unattractive metal fences introduced after the gulf war as part of quick repairs to the township, to the original style of wooden ones made a big difference to the environment of our oil heritage. It's the small things in life that can lift our moral giving us strength to face bigger challenges. Adding to this I faced changes from the new laws that banned professionals with tenures over 35 years to stay in the company. This meant 40% of the senior management needed to change out and have new appointees. This was the first time that a CEO had to manage 9 freshly appointed deputy CEOs, along with a 45% change in Managers, and 40% change in Team Leaders. This was the first time in the history of the oil Industry of Kuwait that we have seen such a transformation in leadership and risked continuity issues. Despite these issues, I found ways to unite the leadership under the idea of ONE KOC and set myself to steer the company to success.

The Pearls of Knowledge and Experience

It is inspiring to see how you managed the company despite these harsh conditions. People in the company rarely understand the extent of the pressures on senior leadership.

This was just the start of what I faced. There was a legacy of major investment plans that were pending resolution and decisions. These were tough decisions to make quickly and required huge effort from me and my team to unravel all the blocks to progress. The complexity lays in the interlinks between projects, the risks of duplication, the opportunity to integrate to gain efficiencies versus delay from waiting on integration issues. One by one through a very uphill struggle we closed out countless issues and created a new direction for the company. For example, the challenges of our maturing fields and aggressive growth agenda required a substantial increase in rigs from 30 to 100 in a very short timeframe. That was a 300% increase in activity in a complex operating environment. It was impossible to sanction without the corresponding transformation in the organization and support systems throughout KOC to be able to manage the increased activity effectively. Thanks to the support of my leadership team at every level in the company, we achieved this massive feat.

Another two issues that needed urgent resolution was pace of recruitment to replace the sudden reduction of staff that reached 35 years of experience and the increasingly young workforce with skills and capability gaps. Our first achievement was in successfully increasing graduate intake from 200/year to 800/year. I am really proud to welcome more of our youngsters into the oil industry.

The next issue was to expand the inclusion of IOCs in our company to increase the level of capability through close co-operation, on the job coaching and international work experience assignments. A pilot model in 2010 using ETSA principles worked very well in the Jurassic gas project. However significant challenge from audit and legal had stifled progress on expanding this model to other assets. We were stuck. It took enormous effort from me and my team to face all the questioning in court, in parliament, engaging with KPC, Oil ministry etc. Before we could close out successfully all the mistaken charges raised against this ETSA. An important aspect of

fighting this battle was to shield the rest of KOC from the distraction. That was my role; to act as a buffer, a safeguard to protect KOC from interruptions in driving forward and delivering on production promises. By taking total accountability I also deflected the legal heat away from my people. This was a big drain on our limited resources but we did not give up and the fruits of this effort came when we successfully engaged two major IOCs to support our largest Oil and Gas assets, SEK and North Kuwait in 2016. It is now up to the next generations in KOC to squeeze value out of this amazing opportunity.

And it will not be easy; it is never easy diving for the pearls of knowledge and experience. I recall my time working with IOCs under TSA after the invasion. I absorbed, questioned and challenged everything in pursuit of learning from the best. I put my hand up to participate in any joint projects so that I would sharpen my skills and deepen my experience. Although the journey was tough for the multiple teams throughout the organization who raised their bar to meet these challenges and support me, the outcomes from our joint efforts were truly amazing. After an intense and personally rewarding experience in KOC, it was a welcomed change to move out of the 'hottest seat' in upstream and dive into the business of the downstream challenge in KIPIC.

From Upstream to Downstream—Breaking New Ground in Creating KIPIC

Please tell us about the new assignment, as KIPIC CEO. Not everyone has the energy to start a whole new company as big as this one!

I do feel this renewed energy within me. People in high places have placed full trust in me to establish the company and deliver its strategy and I will not disappoint them.

How do you feel about working in downstream, after a full career dedicated to upstream?

I am a process engineer and processing in downstream needs different experience from upstream, however at the CEO level, the leadership skills required are the same. Experiencing change every two to three years has been tough, however it provided me with the opportunity to broaden my experience and mature sufficiently as a leader to be able to steer any company in the oil and gas arena.

Every three years! These are clear messages for the next generations. It is early days yet in KIPIC, but can you share any new insights?

Starting a brand new company from nothing and taking over 3 ongoing projects from KNPC and PIC brings a whole new meaning to the word ‘challenging’. I was faced with 2 mega tasks. The first was starting a new mega company with all its legal, financial, organizational and contractual frameworks. When was the last time we did this in KPC? Historically the largest revenue generating companies in KPC have been ready-made, well established ‘take-overs’ from International companies who set them up originally.

Although this was a multifaceted task with such complexities, never before undertaken in KPC, the pace of starting a new company is less critical when there are no projects already initiated. But this is not what I faced. The next mega task was to transfer 3 ongoing massive projects worth 26 billion dollars, two of which were critically in the construction phase. Imagine the management of change needed to transfer multi-billion dollar projects without disruptions to the work. Imagine, the legal and contractual nightmare to ensure full accountability and liability issues were intact with existing contracts moving across from one company to another brand-new entity. Imagine the risks to project delivery schedules if anything was over-looked. And imagine the legal nightmare from contractor claims if a minor detail or two was missed.

I also face misconceived ideas on the pace of the transition. This was due to the lack of experience on the complexities involved in setting up KIPIC, within KPC and the ministry—they thought it would be easy and quick. It wasn’t easy, but despite many obstacles, we delivered at top speed with people working all hours to make it happen. All the protocols are now complete to legalize the movement of the assets from KNPC without any disruptions to the projects. A major hurdle and a major milestone reached successfully. The journey has just started and the first chapter in the history of KIPIC is being written. The most important next step is happening—right people in the right places within the organization to deal with the diverse demands of the 3 mega projects, the Refinery, the LNG plant and the Petrochemicals all integrated in one site at Al-Zour—this kind of cross function integration downstream is also a first for a K-company.

It Is All About the Team

What can you share about your leadership style?

I can be quite persistent and unwavering in pursuing what I believe is good for the company. However, my biggest strengths lie in challenging the norms,

in breaking down barriers and more importantly in hearing out new ideas no matter how unconventional. I rarely take 'no' or 'not possible' for an answer. They say if you do what you've always done you will get what you've always got.

How can we expect a different outcome if we are not willing to do things differently? I am open to new ways of working, willing to take risks and persevere where others give up. I also take care to give a lot of space for talented people to deliver and provide timely support when needed. My strength lies in being able to engage individuals to succeed. Our people are the building blocks of our successes and their true power is rarely unleashed fully until they become part of the decision-making process. Business transformation comes as much from within as from importing best practices from around the world. How we do business in the rest of the world is not always directly relevant to Kuwait. There is a strong element of people and culture that needs to be blended and my leadership style lies in creating the right balance between these elements to tailor solutions that are locally effective in Kuwait.

Renewed Longevity of Greater Burgan, Protecting HSSE and Uniting KOC to Deliver on a Recent, Huge Production Challenge

Where do you consider your leadership added most value?

During my career there were many occasions that left a mark on me and I would like to expand on 4 that occurred in the last 10 years.

Achieving the discovery of billions of barrels of new reserves in our maturing field—Greater Burgan was not a chance event. I had a gut feeling that there was more to Burgan than we were led to believe and I followed through with this instinct that led to the discovery. This gave us the opportunity to make significant new development plans to access these reserves and increase our aspirations towards a longer sustained future. These new reserves and investment plans, added previously unimaginable value. The new value created went into in hundreds of billions of dollars in net present value at 7%, which was equivalent at the time in 2012, to the market capitalization of the largest private oil and gas company in the world—Exxon Mobil.

To be part of creating a whole new future for our next generations is humbling. I felt tremendous pride in the people within my team who made this happen. To have given our country's largest asset a whole new lease of life is an unforgettable event in my career and I hope in theirs too. We have made history together. These are stories we will be telling our grandchildren and great grandchildren in years to come.

The message is not to ignore your gut feeling, your instincts.

The next 2 events that changed me are to do with people and safety. Protecting people and creating a safe environment to work and live in, has always been a priority with me.

I led a complex HSSE incident in the Ahmadi township following gas leaks that caused explosions. After rapid evacuation of part of the township, novel solutions were implemented to monitor, mitigate and sustain its containment, managing delicate interfaces with government and environmental bodies in the process. The next event was the recovery from a major HSSE crisis when an exploration drilling into a new opportunity resulted in a poisonous sour gas blow-out. I led the successful containment of the well with no harm to people and environment breaking new ground in emergency response standards in KOC.

These two incidents changed me as they had the potential to cause significant damage and disruption to the lives of many people and their families. I look back and feel that there must have been a guiding hand that helped us contain these potential disasters. More importantly it taught me not to take for granted the fragile nature of living close to our giant oil and gas reserves. And that our biggest treasure is our people, not the liquid gold from the ground.

Wow! People rarely see how a potential major disaster was averted from a small incident

The last major event I recall was the most recent challenge in 2015 when production ceased in the neutral zone. I was the CEO of KOC at the time. We were stretched on meeting our production targets. So how do you create something out of nothing at such short notice? And yet, we did pull a hat-trick and added production to offset the deficit within a record 10 months. This was no magic. This was the power of people uniting behind one goal, one purpose with unwavering commitment to the success of KOC.

It required aligning the senior leadership and managers to work across the organization, demolishing all boundaries. Setting rules to make this happen was tough. Creating space for assets to forgo their individual KPIs to meet the

company objective was not easy. Appointing a deputy CEO (DCEO) of one asset as lead for this task, to interfere in the business of other assets required humility and sacrifice on the part of the other DCEOs.

To my great delight I saw people stepping up and helping across assets with allegiance to just KOC as a whole, not the team nor the asset that they came from. I look back with pride at how by providing the right framework, the right support and believing in the capabilities of my team, the impossible became possible. I see those same people driving outstanding performance today in KOC and I continue to be very proud of them. As I watch them deliver quietly and humbly behind the scenes, I say to myself these are our leaders of tomorrow!

Alternative Energy Sources Are Here to Stay—Get Onboard

What are the challenges that you see for the energy industry in the future?

The energy industry is making increased headway towards renewables by driving down the costs to be competitive with conventional. What does this mean for Kuwait? We need to reassess the diversification in our local energy consumption and start planning for the longer term. If it is more cost efficient to have renewable and greener energy then it allows us to preserve our depleting oil and gas reserves and extend the life of its supply for our needs. And it could also present an economically attractive opportunity to export more by transitioning the local consumption to renewables.

Another challenge comes along with the new opportunities of reaping efficiencies from becoming fully digital. The world needs to be better prepared against the increasing risks of cyberattacks. In Kuwait we need to be simultaneously prepared on cyber security as our assets move towards the opportunities of a fully digital operating environment. And although coordinating inter-related diverse projects is an ongoing challenge, we cannot stop the digital progress if we are to be competitive on development and extraction costs.

A new challenge is emerging from the recent downturn in oil prices. It has created a different mindset worldwide and capital investment has moved from long term complex major projects to short cycle time, smaller investments with faster returns. This change in appetite towards lower risk projects cannot sustain a long term supply in the oil and gas industry. However, this challenge for the rest of the world in the coming years could be an opportunity for the OPEC suppliers. So, the message for Kuwait is to be ready—be cost efficient and competitive with the rest of the world compared to alternate energy

sources, embrace the opportunities of renewables that could thrive in our environment, be smarter with digital technology and be proactive on cybersecurity.

Take Control of Shaping Your Future Today—Walk the Talk

What message would you like to send to the young generation?

I have huge expectations from the youth of today as they have a monumental task to absorb knowledge and experience from those about to retire from the energy sector. Tomorrow's energy industry is increasingly about best-in-class and performance excellence. It is about surviving in a very competitive environment and showcasing your ability to tackle tougher challenges in maturing reservoirs.

It is about thinking bigger than the team, group and asset you are in. It is about demonstrating early in your career that you can step up to lead by example not by instruction. I repeat, 'lead by example' —walk the talk. It is about showing that you are able to engage and motivate people to deliver. It is about using the carrot far more than the stick to galvanize teams into action.

Tomorrow's great leaders will have admirers very early in their careers and respected for the way they conduct business with professionalism and in how they lead teams with humility.

We tend to focus a lot on technical coaching and my advice to the young generation is to seek people who will also coach and advise them to be leaders of tomorrow. Find your true passion in the kind of work you choose. Find a role model to inspire you and find a mentor to guide you. Ask yourself what the future leadership in the K companies would look like for the new challenges ahead? And how can you play a part in shaping that future? Ask yourself if you really need anybody's permission or invitation to be a leader in any field that fires your interest? If you see tomorrow's future has to be very different from what you see today then start with the person that you can influence the most—yourself. Be the change you wish to see, live tomorrow's future today.

A Shared Selfie

- **Your favorite word:** Value.
- **A city:** Ahmadi, Kuwait, the city I was born.
- **An important person for you:** My mother.

- **Your favorite food:** A well-prepared Zubaidi, it is my favorite Kuwaiti dish.
- **Who supported you the most?** My mother.



Learned in the Trenches

Insights into Leadership and Resilience Compiled by

Two Women Leaders in Energy

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