

Arab Summit Issues Decisions [March 28, 2007]

Riyadh, Mar. 29, SPA – The 19th Arab Summit, which concluded its deliberations in Riyadh today under the chairmanship of the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz, has issued the following decisions:

The conference approved and lauded the report presented by the former chairman of the summit, President Omer Hasan Albasheir of the Sudan. The conference also passed and praised the report submitted by the Arab League Secretary General Amr Mousa.

The summit decided the convoking of an Arab Consultative Summit to tackle a specific issue, if deemed necessary. The summit will be prepared by Foreign Ministers Council in Cooperation with the Arab League Secretariat General. Closed-Door discussions will be confined to the issue of concern. Consultative meeting will never prevent the convoking of the scheduled ordinary summit in March every year.

The conference asserted that the issues of Arab national security necessitate tackling from a comprehensive and full-fledged perspective that takes into consideration the sources and forms of political, security, economic, cultural and social threats coming from inside or outside the Arab countries.

In this regard, an open expert-level tasks force will be formed to determine the nature of current and future risks and challenges facing the Arab Ummah and forge appropriate proposals.

The summit reiterated the adherence of all Arab countries to the Arab Peace Initiative as it was approved by Beirut Summit 2002 with all its components based on the international legitimacy resolutions and its principles to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and bring about fair and comprehensive peace that achieve security for all countries of the region and enable the Palestinian people to set up their independent state with eastern Al-Quds as capital.

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The conference also reiterated the call for the Israeli government and Israelis to seize the opportunity to accept the Arab Peace Initiative to resume direct negotiations and seriousness on all tracks.

The conference confirmed complete support for the Mekka Agreement reached under the patronage of the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques, Appreciating the efforts exerted by other Arab countries, the Arab League, and OIC [Organization of Islamic Countries], which contributed to reaching the agreement which resulted in the formation of a [Palestinian] national unity government.

The summit called on all Arab countries to extend support for the Palestinian President and his national government to enable them [to] fulfil their national duties in meeting the needs of the Palestinian people and achieve their national interests and goals.

The Arab countries should not cede to the siege measures imposed on the Palestinian people, the leaders said, adding that international organizations and countries are invited to practice immediate lift of the blockade, recognize the Palestinian unity government and deal with it without discrimination.

The conference condemned the political, economic and military siege and all hostility actions taken by Israel that led to serious losses in lives and property and held Israel responsible of those losses, calling on it to shoulder the necessary indemnity.

The conference also called on the world community to resume its assistance to the Palestinian National Authority and the Palestinian people and respect their democratic choice.

The summit called for coercing Israel to set free all Palestinian prisoners and detainees toll of an estimated 10,000 in the Israeli jails, including the speakers of the Legislative Council and some of its members, and minister.

The leaders demanded the Secretary General of the United Nations to exert strenuous efforts and take all necessary measures to secure the prompt and unconditional release of arrested Palestinian women and

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children in Israeli prisons, provide international protections for the according to UN Resolution No. 1325 issued in October 2000 and relevant UN Resolutions.

They also called on the Security Council to bear its responsibility toward the Palestinian people by sending international observers for protesting them against continuous atrocities and aggression and to mount enough pressure to halt its continuous military attacks against the Palestinians.

The Secretary General of the Arab League was assigned by the summit to provide assistance to the Iraqi government and the Palestinian National Authority to forge a quick solution to provide protection for Palestinian refugees in Iraq.

The summit called on the Secretariat and the Economic and Social Council of the AL [Arab League] and other specialized Arab Organizations to work in cooperation of the Palestinian National Unity [Government] to conduct comprehensive studies at formulating appropriate programs to complete and support the organizational administrative hierarchy and institutional and technical abilities necessary for running the civil affairs of the Palestinian society, upgrading the level of public services, increasing the output ability of the Palestinian economic institutions to cope with the priorities of building a Palestinian state in the fields of production and services through programs and projects of Arab-Palestinian cooperation in which international cooperation bodies, training institutions and Arab development finance funds could take part.

The summit extended thanks to the Arab countries who lived up to their commitments, totally or partially, in contributing to Al-Aqsa und A-Quds uprising funds, Palestinian National Authority budget and called on those who remained short of their commitments to pay their arrears [debts].

The Arab countries were called to continue their support for the Palestinian National Authority Budget.

The leader thanked the friendly countries for their invaluable support for the budget of the Palestinian National Authority and called on them to proceed with that aid.

The Arab leaders lauded Lebanon's resistance of the Israeli brutal aggression, considering the unity of Lebanese people in facing the aggression the Israeli brutal aggression, considering the unity of [the] Lebanese people in facing the aggression a guarantee for the future of Lebanon and its security and stability.

They also reiterated full Arab solidarity with Lebanon and provide political and economic support to the Lebanese government in a way that maintains Lebanese national unity as well as Lebanon's security, stability and sovereignty over all of its territory.

They commended the national role played by [the] Lebanese army in the south and in all regions of Lebanon according to the Lebanese government decision and supported the mission of this army as decided by the Lebanese Council of Ministers to enforce the Lebanese sovereignty over all its territory, thanking brotherly and friendly countries for their contribution to strengthening UNIFIL troops as stated in Security Council Resolution No. 1701 / 2006.

The summit emphasized the need to achieve a firm and lasting cease fire, condemned the Israeli violations of Security Council Resolution No. 1701 / 2006, held Israel responsible for these violations and called on the Security Council to bear responsibility to force Israel to abide by full cease-fire and stop its violations of Lebanese sovereignty of land, sea and air.

The summit also asserted Lebanon's right to control its water territories [resources?] in accordance with the international law and in opposition to Israeli ambitions.

Arab leaders welcomed the seven-point plan presented by the Lebanese government, calling on the UN Security Council to take the Lebanese proposal, included in this plan regarding Shebaa farm area, into consideration when the UN Secretary General presents his proposals on this subject in accordance with Security Council Resolution No. 1701 / 2006.

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Arab leaders also called on all concerned parties to cooperate with the United Nations to find a solution to this issue in a way that ensure the rights of Lebanon.

The conferees held Israel fully responsible for the aggression and the consequences incurred by Lebanon in the summer of 2006 as well as the deliberate targeting of civilians and infrastructure which constitute a flagrant and grave violation of the international law, particularly the International Humanitarian Law and the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

They also held Israel responsible for compensating Lebanon and the Lebanese citizens for the tragic direct and indirect loss that affected the Lebanese people and economy due to the Israeli aggression.

Arab leaders considered Israel['s] acts during its aggression against Lebanon a war crime that necessitate chasing the perpetrators to appear before the concerned international references, welcoming the resolutions adopted unanimously by [the] Human Rights Council on 8/12/2006 commending the report and recommendations of investigation committee established by the council on 11/8/2006 which commended the Israeli violations of human rights during the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

The summit thanked member states for urgently assisting Lebanon in the field of relief and reconstruction as well as their support declared during [the] Arab and international conference for the support of Lebanon / Paris 3/ held in 25/1/2007.

They also lauded the draft of reform and economic and social advancement programme presented by the Lebanese government to modernize the Lebanese economy and enhance sustainable growth rates in addition to improve living conditions for all Lebanese.

The conference adopted a plan for supporting Lebanon during the reconstruction phase and development [of] its economy presented by the Economic and Social Council [of the Arab League] which met in Beirut on 16-17/10/2006.

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The conference also urged member states to implement the recommendations issued by the Council, thanking the member states and Arab funds which previously presented aids and financial assistance to the Lebanese government.

The conference demanded the rest of member states to fulfil their obligations stated in Arab summit conferences regarding the support for Lebanon.

Arab leaders affirmed supporting Lebanon in

- its sovereign right to practice its political choices within constitutional institutions,*
- its demand for the release of Lebanese prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons,*
- its demand for the removal of hundreds of thousands of mines left behind by the Israeli occupation.*
- its call on the international community as well as judicial and political authorities to put pressure on Israel to provide compensation to Lebanon for the loss and damage resulting from Israel's occupation and repeated attacks on the Lebanese territories.*

Within the context of Lebanese agreement on the principle of setting up a court of an international nature, the summit stressed the need for unearthing the truth behind the terrorist assassination that took the life of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and his colleagues as well as the other terrorist assassinations ever since the attempt against Minister Marwan Hamadah.

The gathering stressed the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, warning that [a] failure to solve the issue of the Palestinian residing in Lebanon and attempts to resettle them will destabilize the region and hinder the achievement of a just peace in the region.

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The meeting strongly condemned international terrorism, noting that Arab states are effectively participating in anti-terror efforts and drawing a line between terrorism and the legitimate resistance against the Israeli occupation.

Considering Lebanon an integral part of the Arab nation, the summit urged all Lebanese factions to enter into a national dialogue, calling on all Lebanese to exert efforts to resolve the current political crisis.

The summit stressed that the Arab perceptions of a political and security solution for the challenges faced by Iraq is based on respect for Iraq's unity, sovereignty, independence and Arab Islamic identity.

The leaders said Iraq's stability and overcoming its present crisis require a balanced political and security solution addressing the causes of the crisis and weeding out the roots of terrorism and sectarian sedition.

The Gathering also stressed the need for respecting the will of the Iraqi people to determine their political future, adding that the establishment of security and stability is the sole responsibility of the Iraqi national unity government, constitutional institutions and political leaders. This is in addition to the support of Arab countries and Iraq's neighbors for efforts being made to achieve national reconciliation.

The summit strongly condemned the acts of terror against Iraqi people and their institutions as they threaten peace and security. It also welcomed the serious steps taken by the Iraqi government to implement the security plan, enforce law and end violence.

The meeting also supported the Iraqi government's efforts to reorganize its security institutions on nationalistic [national] and profession basis, calling for effective Arab participations in these efforts.

The summit welcomed the main the main objectives and principles contained in the Magna Charta adopted at a meeting at the UN Headquarters on March 16, 2007.

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The meeting urged member states to write off the debts owed by Iraq. The summit stressed its support for the United Arab Emirates' full sovereignty over the three islands of Greater and lesser Tomb and Abu Musa, backing whatever measures are taken by the UAE to regain sovereignty over the islands. It also condemned Iran's continued occupation of these islands. The gathering also underlined Libya's legitimate right to indemnifications for the damage resulting from sanctions imposed on it.

The summit rejected the so-called Syria's accountability law, considering it as a violation of international lawful resolutions and [the] Arab Charter, giving US laws supremacy over international law.

The meeting stressed the brotherly, historic ties between Lebanon and Syria based on mutual respect for sovereignty and independence.

The conference expressed appreciation for efforts being made by the Arab League in cooperation with the AU [Organisation of African Unity], UN and EU to resolve [the] Darfur crisis, stressing the need for the Sudanese government and the African Union to continue their efforts to establish security and stability in Darfur

The meeting thanked the states that have paid their contribution to support the AU forces, calling on those who defaulted in their payment to fulfil their commitment.

The conference called upon the armed groups that failed to sign the Darfur Peace Agreement to renounce military escalation.

The meeting also called on the international community to fulfil its commitment to toward backing and implementing [the] Darfur Peace Agreement, extending the necessary material support to the AU mission in Darfur.

The gathering welcomed the steps being taken to implement the comprehensive peace agreement between the Sudanese government and the Sudan Liberation Movement, signed in Nairobi. It also welcomed the peace between Sudan's government and Eastern Sudan Front signed in Asmara.

The summit welcomed to African Union's decision to send African troops to bolster stability in Somalia, calling on the General Secretariat to continue cooperation with the AU, UN and IGAD [Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Djibouti] to ensure the speedy implementation of the resolution to deploy peace keeping troops in Somalia to help achieve stability and security, paving the way for dialogue and national reconciliation in Somalia. It also called on member states to extend various forms of support to Somali government.

The conference stressed keenness on the national unity of Comoro Republic and the its territorial integrity, welcoming efforts by the Arab League, the African union, the United nations and the neighboring countries with regard to implementing [the] Moroni National Reconciliation Agreement signed in December, 2003.

Arab leaders decided to convene an extra ordinary ministerial level meeting of the Arab League Council, preceded by a meeting of a committee of senior Arab officials to evaluate Arab efforts to rid the Middle East region of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons.

They urged the Council to assess the Arab policy adopted during the past decades in light of international changes, reviewing the successful aspects and reasons of failure.

The Council is also required to propose a practical mechanism to rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction.

The summit called on the Arab states to expand the use of peaceful nuclear technology in all domains serving continuous development, mindful of the diversity of Arab states' needs. It also called for the setting up of bodies and organizations concerned with the peaceful use of nuclear energy in each Arab country.

The summit stressed anew its denunciation of all forms of terrorism for whatever motives or justifications, rejecting any confusion between terrorism and magnanimous Islam which calls for upholding tolerance and shunning terrorism and extremism.

The conference underlined the need for continued efforts to remove obstacles hindering the promotion of Arab-African cooperation.

It also called for continued efforts by the Arab General Secretariat and the AU Commission for holding the second Arab-African summit as soon as possible.

The meeting asked the Secretary General to pursue efforts and contacts with the EU Presidency and the European Commission to develop collective Arab-European relations including joint Arab-European dialogue in accordance with the higher Arab interests.

Stressing its previous decisions, the meeting expressed the Arab countries keenness on enhancing relations with the People's Republic of China in all spheres.

The conference welcomed the convening of the second summit for Arab and Latin American countries scheduled for Morocco in early 2008.

The summit highlighted the need for conducting a true dialogue among civilizations as part of the Arab stance, calling for adoption of the culture of dialogue and interlacing of civilizations with a view to establishing more balanced relations and ensuring world peace and security.

The Council approved the general structure of the executive programme of the Arab Customs Union. It also approved the continuous Arab agricultural development strategy.

Arab leaders urged the Arab states to study enactment of laws and regulations to encourage inter-Arab tourism. They also called on member states to support the reconstruction of residential buildings and infrastructure destroyed by the Israeli aggression in [the] Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Finally, the Arab leaders decided to convene the 20th Arab League Council at the summit level under the chairmanship of the Syrian Arab Republic in March 2008.

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