

Speech of Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit,
Secretary General of the League of Arab States,
Before the Council of the League of Arab States,
At the summit level, ordinary session 32
Jeddah, 19 May 2023

Your Majesties, Excellencies and Highnesses,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin my address by expressing my utmost gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and to His Royal Highness Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, as well as the esteemed people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for their warm and gracious hospitality during our stay.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Kingdom for assuming the presidency of the 32nd session of the summit, and I humbly pray that God guides you towards the path that best serves our nation and its people.

The current international landscape is fraught with danger and marked by intense polarisation and fierce competition between major powers, often at the expense of smaller or unilateral powers. In light of these challenges, Arab countries must prioritise Arab interests as a fundamental criterion for their international positions. Coordination and collective action are essential to strengthen the Arab bloc in the face of external pressures.

Despite enduring suffering, bloodshed, and pain for more than a decade, the crises in our Arab region remain unresolved. Millions of Arabs are still refugees and displaced persons, and today, Sudan is reeling from a new wave of grief as civilians bear the brunt of armed confrontation imposed by certain groups or individuals on the country's soil and the integrity of its national institutions.

I urge the Jeddah summit to serve as a starting point for activating an Arab-led solution that puts an end to the bloodshed in Sudan, rectifies past mistakes, and prioritises the best interests of the Sudanese state over narrow interests of certain factions or individuals.

We must also work towards putting an end to the bloodshed and losses resulting from civil strife, recognising that there are no winners or losers in these conflicts. While the Arab crises may currently be in a state of stagnation compared to the more inflamed situations of the past, this presents an opportunity to activate Arab solutions to these crises. In Syria, I welcome President Bashar Al-Assad's attendance at this esteemed council, and I hope that the Arab nations can contribute to finding effective solutions to the manifold pains afflicting the Syrian people.

Interference in the affairs of the Arab region has led to strife, division, and bloodshed. Nonetheless, there are signs of potential change in the approach of neighbouring countries, and I welcome the agreement signed between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran last March. Relations with all neighbours must be based on respect for the principles of good neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal

affairs of states, which are basic tenets of the United Nations Charter and which our national states abide by.

The situation in Palestine remains a deep concern that its people cannot bear alone. The reckless practices of the Israeli occupation government have led to a shocking escalation in violence and killing in recent months. I salute the steadfastness of the Palestinians throughout the occupied land and appeal to the international community to respond resolutely to the provocative policies and practices of that government, which fuel extremism and hatred.

There is a clear trend towards reclaiming ownership of issues and activating the role of Arab nations as active agents in their own affairs. The summit for "Renewal and Change" in Jeddah represents a critical step towards restoring Arab issues that were previously left to others, resulting in complicated paths and intertwined threads. Today, we must actively engage with crises and proactively seek to resolve them with unwavering determination and effort, in order to preserve the security and future of our nation and its people.

In closing, I wish this summit every success and reiterate my gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and to His Royal Highness Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, as well as the honourable people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for their hospitality and care. May God guide us towards the path that best serves our nation and its people.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Sunday, 16 April 2023

The statement of the Council of the League of Arab States on the level of permanent delegates in an extraordinary session on developments in Sudan

The Council of the League of Arab States on the level of permanent delegates convened an extraordinary session on 16 April 2023, under the leadership of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The purpose of the meeting was to deliberate on the developments in the Republic of Sudan, at the request of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During the session, the Council expressed its profound remorse for the casualties in the recent clashes and extended its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and the entire Sudanese populace.

- The Council demanded an immediate cessation of all armed conflicts to halt the loss of lives and safeguard the security and well-being of civilians, as well as the Sudanese people's capabilities, territorial integrity, and sovereignty.

- The Council emphasised the significance of a prompt return to the peaceful path in resolving the Sudanese crisis and charting a new phase that aligns with the aspirations and expectations of the Sudanese people. This new phase should also enhance stability in Sudan's political, economic, and security landscapes.

- The Council expressed its concern about the severity of the violent escalation in the Republic of Sudan, along with the far-ranging and uncertain repercussions that it could have, both domestically and regionally. In light of this, the Council called on all parties to prioritise the interest of Sudan, its state, and people, by exercising utmost restraint and

collaborating to de-escalate the situation. This approach is necessary to prevent the situation from worsening and to avert its deterioration.

- The Council underscored its readiness to exert all efforts to support the Republic of Sudan in achieving a sustainable resolution to the crisis that aligns with the interests of the Sudanese people, who are considered brothers to the League of Arab States.

- The Council is committed to closely monitoring developments in Sudan and intensifying Arab contacts as needed to achieve the aforementioned objectives. To that end, the Council called for staying in a state of permanent session to monitor the situation in Sudan closely.

- The Council invited the group of Arab ambassadors accredited in Khartoum to coordinate and communicate continuously with the Sudanese authorities, parties, and components. This coordination should aim to provide the necessary support to help restore stability in Sudan. The Council also called for close coordination between the ambassadors and the General Secretariat and the President of the Council at the ministerial level.

- Finally, the Council requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to implement the contents of this statement.