

Local

Kuwait highlights need for 'safe,' 'sustainable' humanitarian aid for Syria

Developments in northeastern Syria have destabilizing effect on the region: Kuwait

NEW YORK: Kuwait underlined on Friday the importance of timely, safe, sustainable and unimpeded humanitarian access to Syria, while allowing humanitarian aid access to those in need. This came in a speech delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the UN Bader Al-Munayekh, on behalf of those in charge of the Syrian humanitarian file: Kuwait, Belgium and Germany, at the UN Security Council session on the Syrian humanitarian file. All parties should respect the international humanitarian law (IHL), including the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure throughout Syria, he underscored. Over the past two weeks, they followed developments in northeastern Syria and saw the effects of the Turkish military

Not the first time
"For many of those fleeing, this is not the first time they have been displaced," he said, mentioning that they live under the rule of IS and need permanent protection to civilians. They have reiterated the Secretary-General's statement, that any military operation must fully respect international law, including the Charter of the UN and IHL, resolving concerns through peaceful and diplomatic means, Munayekh stated. Idlib governorate witnessed a decrease in air strikes, however, the civilian casualties continued, in which the escalation must stop with great commitment to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals in accordance with IHL, he said. Counter-terrorism operations do not relieve the parties of their obligations under international law, including IHL, he stressed.

He condemned attacks and is concerned about the threat posed by explosive remnants of war and landmines to civilians. Any humanitarian demining activities should avoid civilians suffering, he said, emphasizing that all parties should adhere to precautionary anti-violent principles. He stressed to provide timely, safe, sustainable and unhindered humanitarian assistance and to allow the UN and its humanitarian partners to continue carrying out crucial work in northern Syria. Cross-border operations, which were renewed under the UN Security Council Resolution 2449, were the driving force of millions of people in Syria, particularly in the northwest, where the cross-border route contributes to nearly 40 percent of all humanitarian assistance to residents in Syria.

68,000 people
Munayekh is grateful for the Secretary-General over renewing the decision of continuing cross-border operations before the end of this year. As for Al-Hawl camp, he



HASAKEH, SYRIA: A Displaced Syrian man soothes a baby inside a school turned into a shelter for people displaced by the war, in the northeastern Syrian town of Hasakeh, on October 25, 2019. —AFP

said there were still 68,000 people, 94 percent of whom were women and children, and that according to another statistic, 55 percent of the children in the camp were under 12 years of age. He welcomed joint missions with the UN to provide food and urged for a durable solution in the southwest, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report. He stressed the importance of accountability as the Syrian conflict witnessed egregious violations of IHL and human rights law. He welcomed beginning working

on the Commission of Inquiry established by the Secretary-General, saying it is vital to conduct a prompt and thorough investigation into the incidents that took place, especially attacks on facilities. Regarding the return of refugees, Munayekh said that his stance on it has not changed, as all returns must be safe, voluntary, dignified and informed. This month marks the first step towards a comprehensive political process in line with Resolution 2254. — KUNA



Over 180,000 civilians were displaced

operation as disturbing, having a destabilizing effect on the region, posing risks to the war against the so-called Islamic State (IS) and already worsening the dire humanitarian situation, he said. Since military operations began in the northeast, civilian casualties have been reported, over 180,000 civilians were displaced, including 80,000 children and civilian infrastructure were damaged, he said.

EU, Kuwait agree to launch human rights dialogue

BRUSSELS: The European Union (EU) and Kuwait have agreed to launch a dialogue on human rights, said Ambassador Walid Al-Khubaizi, Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs. Khubaizi made this announcement on the sidelines of a working dinner hosted by Kuwait's Ambassador to the EU Jassem Al-Budaiwi, Friday evening, following a meeting with Fernando Gentilini, Managing Director for Middle East and North Africa at the European External Action Service, the EU's foreign service.

Khubaizi expressed Kuwait's aspiration to work with the incoming European Commission at the same level and the excellent coordination with which Kuwait has been working with the current Commission in all bilateral and regional files of common interest. Regarding the launching of an EU-Kuwait human rights dialogue, Khubaizi pointed out that the State of Kuwait has an honorable human rights record, which is testified by international organizations such as the Human Rights Committee and other non-governmental organizations that praise the State of Kuwait's human rights record. He pointed out that in this dialogue, the Kuwaiti said will also be briefed on the human rights situation in the EU. Further, they will discuss ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in this field, he said, and noted that that this dialogue aims to achieve many results, most notably the exchange of experiences in the field of human rights between both parties.

Khubaizi said that the two sides at yesterday's meeting discussed several issues related to enhancing bilateral cooperation, including preparations for the next meeting of senior officials to be held in Kuwait in



BRUSSELS: Ambassador Walid Al-Khubaizi, Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs, meets with Fernando Gentilini, Managing Director for Middle East and North Africa at the European External Action Service, the EU's foreign service. — KUNA

the first quarter of 2020. "We are pleased with the significant progress we have made in bilateral relations and the consensus reached at the first meeting of senior officials held in November 2018 in Brussels," he said.

Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah led that meeting on behalf of the Kuwaiti side, and the Secretary General of EEAS Helga Schmidt on the European side. "My meeting now was an opportunity for me to discuss the current and upcoming achievements and to prepare for the second meeting, which we hope will be tangible ground as we did at the first meeting," Khubaizi said. He pointed out that there are new signs of the development of relations between the two sides most notably the high level of political coordination between the EU and Kuwait with the opening of the EU diplomatic mission in the State of Kuwait, in addition to the political and bilateral momentum witnessed in the relations at all levels. He said that this development in bilateral relations pro-

vides an opportunity for both sides to discuss and consider the possibility of seeking new opportunities and issues for cooperation. He hoped that the two sides would consider issues related to encouraging and training young people, enhancing trade exchange and exchanging experiences in the field of digital technology.

Khubaizi concluded by referring to the role played by the European Union at the regional and international levels, describing the European efforts to enhance international peace and security as important in the international arena. Both parties share these goals and principles, he noted. It is worth mentioning that during the past year, EU-Kuwaiti relations witnessed two important events, the first of which was the meeting of senior officials between the two sides held in November 2018, in Brussels. The second was the visit of EU High Representative Federica Mogherini to Kuwait in July 2019, to open the EU Delegation there. — KUNA

Kuwait insists on combating human trafficking

NEW YORK: Kuwait underlined the need to combat human trafficking by implementing relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, holding perpetrators accountable and bringing justice to victims. This was mentioned in a speech by Member of the Kuwaiti permanent mission to the UN headquarters in New York Tareq Al-Bannai, before the UNSC session on the Arria-Formula meeting, which was held on Friday under the topics: human trafficking for sexual exploitation during conflict and post-conflict situations, the integration of a comprehensive approach to deal with human trafficking within women, and executing the peace and security agenda in UNSC.

Human trafficking is a violation of human rights and causes conflict, he said, adding that violations are mainly towards women and girls. Crimes of human trafficking are horrendous in nature and are increasingly horrific and brutal, where the rights of innocent and vulnerable people are violated and used to feed a war to which they are victims, he stressed. The suffering of victims of human trafficking is compounded by their forced recruitment, forced marriage and sexual slavery, he said, adding that the UN reports perpetrators of these atrocities, which are continuing and the use of human trafficking as a source of financing terrorism. It cannot be overlooked that human trafficking crimes have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report indicates that over 70 percent of victims of human trafficking during conflict are women and girls, showing areas where gender inequality is most affected by crimes, he underscored.

Implementation of UNSC resolutions work to empower women before the outbreak of conflict, during conflict and post-conflict situations would contribute to address this, Bannai stressed. Addressing human trafficking and its role in feeding the conflict requires a humanitarian response and serious steps on national, regional and international levels, where UNSC addressed the issue of human trafficking in Resolutions 2331 and 2388, calling for concerted efforts to implement these to end violations and ensure accountability of the perpetrators. UNSC can combat human trafficking by strengthening the mandates of peacekeeping missions within the framework of women, peace and security agenda, ensuring the provision of the necessary training to enable peacekeepers to combat conflict-related human trafficking, Bannai noted. International community had put in place other mechanisms to combat human trafficking, such as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), he explained.

The world is witnessing an increase in the number of human trafficking cases, which also requires building the capacity to deal with this, Bannai said. The primary responsibility for protecting populations during conflict rests with Member States, who welcomes partnerships, share the best practices and strengthens security and judicial systems in countries to combat and end human trafficking, he underscored. Solutions to end violations of human rights and human trafficking during conflicts are to end the conflicts themselves and address the root causes, resolving them peacefully through applying resolutions of international legitimacy and the UNSC resolutions, he underlined. — KUNA



NEW YORK: Member of the Kuwaiti permanent mission to the UN headquarters Tareq Al-Bannai speaks during the UNSC session. — KUNA

Kuwait affirms necessity of security in Somalia



NEW YORK: Ambassador Plenipotentiary Bader Al-Munayekh addresses the UN Security Council session. — KUNA

NEW YORK: Kuwait has affirmed necessity of enforcing security and stability in Somalia, particularly within framework of executing international curbs on the nation. Moreover, Kuwait has considered these international sanctions as helpful for the federal government to prevent arms' deliveries to 'Al-Shabab movement,' other armed groups and dry up funding resources for these groups. The official Kuwaiti stance was expressed by the acting charge d'affaires at the permanent mission at the UN, Ambassador Plenipotentiary, Bader Al-Munayekh, addressing a Security Council session, late on Friday. The Security Council first imposed a general and complete arms embargo on Somalia on January 23, 1992 with the adoption of resolution 733 (1992). By resolution 2444 (2018), the Council decided to extend the partial lifting of the arms embargo for the Federal Government of Somalia until November 15, 2019. Munayekh has lauded progress, achieved by the federal government with respect of handling incoming arms and ammunition. He also praised outcome of the "second Somali partnership forum," recently held in Mogadishu, for paving the way for regulating the federal financial system and backing national development schemes. — KUNA

Kuwait opposes conventional arms' proliferation

NEW YORK: Kuwait has manifested special concern for combating proliferation of weapons, namely small and light caliber arms, through effective participation in debates at prominent quarters and supporting UN resolutions in this respect. Kuwait's particular concern of these conventional arms' deadly hazards was expressed by the second secretary of the Kuwaiti permanent mission at the UN Ibrahim Aldai, in his address to the first commission of the UN General Assembly during a session on disarmament and global security. Aldai expressed Kuwait's unwavering advocacy of implementing relevant international treaties and commitments in this respect—aware that these weapons constitute a threat to regional and international security and peace.

The second secretary affirmed Kuwait's commitment to partake, effectively, in any international multi-lateral effort, in harmony with the UN charter, to enable States acquire "legitimate defense capabilities," aimed at facing diverse emerging threats emanating from the illegitimate arms trade. Kuwait acclaims implementation of the treaty for regulars arms trade, renews its emphasis on the necessity that its execution be compatible with the UN charter, respect for States' legitimate rights for meeting their national security and defense requirements. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a multi-lateral treaty that regulates international trade in conventional weapons. It entered into force



NEW YORK: Second secretary of the Kuwaiti permanent mission at the UN Ibrahim Aldai makes his address to the first commission of the UN General Assembly during a session on disarmament and global security. — KUNA

on December 24, 2014. He noted that globalization and technology development facilitated production of these weapons making them available to "non-States groups."

Aldai called for cooperation and information swap among States to tighten control on borders to hinder delivery of these arms to terrorists. Citing an example of the enormous hazards of such conventional but deadly ordnance, he reminded the international community that Kuwait has suffered a lost from landmines left behind by the Iraqi forces that occupied the country (1990-1991). While expressing sympathy with countries that have lost many civilians due to the fatal mines, he urged for more efforts to locate and defuse these deadly ordnance. The Middle East has remained unstable due to a host of reasons such as "illegitimate inflow of light and small arms" into the region, he added. — KUNA