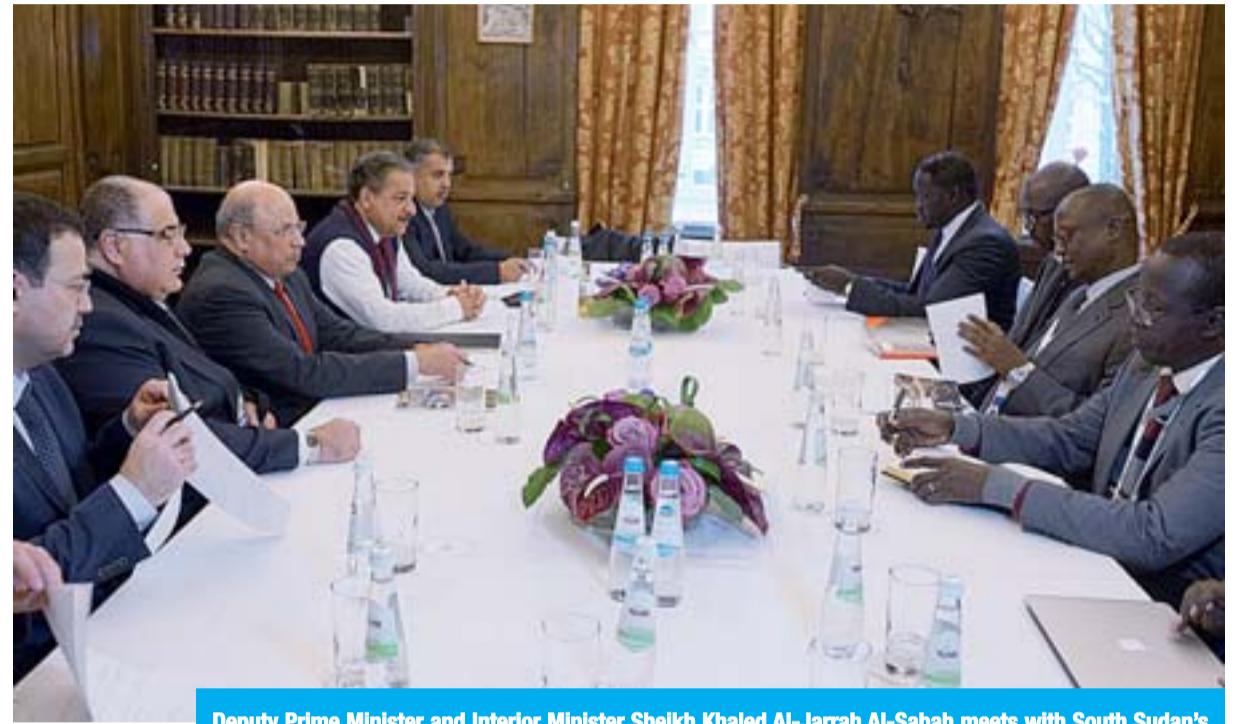


Kuwait stands by countries to resolve conflicts: Minister

Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah participates in Munich Security Conference



MUNICH: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with former UN chief Kofi Annan and former UN envoy for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi. —KUNA



Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with South Sudan's First Vice-President Taban Gai.

MUNICH: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah said on Friday that Kuwait backs peace everywhere and stands by states to resolve conflicts. Sheikh Khaled made the statement after heading a delegation to the Munich Security Conference, which kicked off earlier in the day. Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah affirmed that his participation in the conference is based on Kuwait's keenness to continue making mediation efforts to resolve differences between countries diplomatically in order to avoid the armed conflicts, and boost peace and security, mainly in the Middle East region.

He elaborated that this comes within the framework of the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in this regard. He referred to the Kuwaiti role played to resolve the Yemeni crisis, saying that Kuwait has hosted the intra-Yemeni peace talks for more than three months, and is ready to host the talks until a final agreement is signed.

On humanitarian field, the minister stated that Kuwait has hosted several conferences to back humanitarian situation of Syrians. "Kuwait took part in two international conferences in London and Brussels. It spared no efforts to meet needs of disastrous humanitarian situation of Yemenis. Also it is hosting the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq (KICRI)," he said.



Technological development utilized to recruit terrorists

Technological development

He noted that terrorist elements are mainly depending on technological development in recruiting new individuals and carrying out their attacks and plots. As a result, cyber space has become a source of concern for all and its effects are serious on security aspects, he explained, calling for setting up quickly a security space to combat terrorism, and drying up its intellectual and financial resources before confronting its armed cells. He voiced his hope that the conference would contribute to enhancing coordination among countries to achieve preventive security, which is one of the most prominent security challenges.

Meanwhile, German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen affirmed the necessity of concerted efforts in order to address security challenges facing the world. She noted that military action is not enough neither to

resolve international crises nor settle armed disputes. Military and defense operations should be associated with providing development aid to help poor countries and protect their youth from extremism, she stressed. The German minister underlined the need to back financially the international organizations like the United Nations to help them achieve their missions in a good manner. For her part, French Defense Minister

Florence Parly empathized her support for setting an independent EU strategy so as to overcome new security challenges. She commended the European initiatives aiming to boost cooperation among EU member states.

The three-day event includes more than 30 heads of state and government, in addition to 100 defense and interior ministers across the globe. It discusses means of overcoming security challenges in the world, mainly combating terrorism and conflicts in the Middle East, and the Ukrainian crisis.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Al-Thani, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, British Prime Minister Theresa May, Turkish Prime Minister Ben Ali Yildirim and France's Prime Minister Edward Philippe are among the attendees of the conference.

Meetings

Separately, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah held a meeting yesterday with President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Peter Maurer on ways of promoting and bolstering cooperation between the State of Kuwait and ICRC, and of protecting the victims of armed conflicts. The Kuwaiti minister then met with European Union (EU) Counter Terrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove on how to prop up cooperation between Kuwait and EU in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

Furthermore, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah held a meeting with Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq Nechirvan Barzani. The two officials discussed means of bilateral relations. Then



Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with European Union (EU) Counter Terrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove.

Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah held talks with former UN chief Kofi Annan and former UN envoy for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi on achieving peace and preserving human rights.

Finally, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah held a meeting with South Sudan's First Vice-President Taban Gai in which they focused on enhancing bilateral ties. The Munich Security Conference kicked off on Friday, in the presence of world leaders, premiers, and foreign and defense ministers, with the aim of addressing security challenges. —KUNA

Military vehicle accident kills warrant officer

KUWAIT: A staff warrant officer of the Ground Forces was killed and another injured while on duty due to a military vehicle accident, Kuwait General Staff announced Friday. The accident killed the driver of the military vehicle Staff Warrant Officer Rakan Hadlan of the 35th Shaheed Armored Brigade, and injured his colleague Warrant Officer Malhan Nassar, the Defense Ministry's directorate of moral guidance and public relations said in a statement. The injured was transported immediately to Al-Jahra Hospital for necessary treatment, the ministry said, adding that investigations are currently underway to uncover causes of the accident. —KUNA

Army chief of staff oversees drill for enhancing coordination

KUWAIT: Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khuder has affirmed vital need for close coordination among the armed forces various forces and squads. The chief of staff made the statement yesterday during a visit to the site of the ongoing drill 'Al-Bairaq 7' involving units from the Ministry of Interior and the National Guard.

Lt Gen Khuder said he was briefed during the inspection of the exercising personnel by Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Kandari, the drilling chief and the chief of staff assistant for operations and planning, about phases of the exercise, role of the involved units and the set goals: coordination, expertise swap and enhancing coordination among the army units and the involved squads. Yesterday's drills, due to proceed till February 22, were attended by the Commander of the Ground Force Major General Khaled Al-Saleh Al-Sabah and a number of senior officers.

The drill, which kicked off on Friday, is carried out periodically to assess training and operation levels in all units, the Ministry's Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations quoted Kandari as saying. The



KUWAIT: Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khuder visits the site of the 'Al-Bairaq 7' military drill. —KUNA

drill also aims to preserve the implementation of missions and duties of all military sectors, he added. It seeks to boost joint cooperation and coordination as well as share expertise among all army's units and

sectors taking part in the drill, he noted. Kandari called on land and sea-goers not to approach the military camps and gatherings at the training areas only for their safety. —KUNA

Kuwait highlights Palestinian cause, Syria crisis at UNSC

NEW YORK: Kuwait is leading efforts at the UNSC to highlight the Middle East's most urging matters namely the Syrian crisis and Palestinian cause, said a senior Kuwaiti diplomat late Friday. Kuwait permanent delegate to the UN headquarters in New York and current chair of the UNSC this month, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi told Arab journalists at the UN that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, for the first time, would partake in the council's meeting on the Palestinian situation on February 20.

The UNSC will also hold a similar meeting on

February 22, which will feature a speech delivered on the behalf of former US President Jimmy Carter. The Palestinian cause was always on the top list of priorities for the State of Kuwait, affirmed Ambassador Otaibi who indicated that Kuwait's leadership of the UNSC this month mainly focused on highlighting the situation in Palestine and specifically the catastrophic humanitarian state in the Gaza Strip. The numerous plights in the Gaza Strip and the dire situation there requires the world to continue assisting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Kuwaiti diplomat said.

Syrian crisis

Meanwhile, Ambassador Otaibi touched on the Syrian crisis during his address to the journalists, noting that Kuwait had organized and co-organized conferences aimed at providing aid to the Syrian refugees

since 2013. He affirmed that these events displayed Kuwait's utter commitment to resolve the humanitarian situation in Syria.

On the current status quo in Syria, the Kuwaiti diplomat said that there was a push on part of Kuwait to have the UNSC take considerable action to put an end to the brutal assault against innocent civilians in the war-torn country; however, the conflict amongst a number of Secretary Council members seems to derail these efforts. Ambassador Otaibi affirmed that Kuwait will continue to support and backup efforts aimed at resolving the Syrian crisis in a peaceful manner.

Resolution on Syria

Separately, Foreign Minister of Luxembourg Jean Asselborn said that after the Kuwait conference on reconstruction of Iraq he hopes that one can talk about reconstruction in Syria also. "I just came back from Kuwait, from the conference on the reconstruction

of Iraq, and I hope that in one year we will be able to talk about the reconstruction of Syria too," he told journalists ahead of the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Sofia, Bulgaria.

"I think that what we must support now is the resolution by Sweden and Kuwait at the UNSC. This would mean a small step towards humaneness. The war must end in Syria, it's been going on for seven years now. Secondly, we must be aware that no one will be able to stop this war with weapons," he stated. "We need to concentrate on this UN resolution and as European Union see to it that we reach a phase like we have now in Iraq of reconstruction and reconciliation," noted Asselborn.

"I think we must lead Syria into a transition phase, which is not easy as there are many factions to lead along, and then as international community we need to concentrate on the fight against Daesh, that is the task of the global coalition," he added. —KUNA