

Local

Kuwaiti Prime Minister's Egypt visit to boost ties: Deputy Foreign Minister

Kuwait PM's visit to Egypt to boost commercial cooperation

KUWAIT: The anticipated visit of His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to Egypt is bound to boost already distinguished bilateral ties, said a senior diplomat yesterday. Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said the two-day visit, slated for today, would significantly contribute in the continuing involvement of such vibrant relation, especially that it comes on the heels of the "historic" visit by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to Kuwait last August. He underlined that the timing of the visit was also of great significance due to "very critical" circumstances witnessed by and with the Middle East region, which calls for consultations and coordination between the two countries on the highest of levels. Jarallah also stressed the visit's economic aspect, due to the major private sector delegation accompanying His Highness the Premier to seek business opportunities offered by its Egyptian peer. His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak is expected to meet with President El-Sisi and Prime Minister Moustafa Madbouly. He is also scheduled to sign numerous accords and agreements.

Commercial cooperation

Relations between Kuwait and Egypt have been progressing since their establishment decades ago, as His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's state visit is expected to take these ties to even new heights particularly at the economic and trade levels. Kuwait is Egypt's third largest Arab trading partner

after Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with combined public and private sector's investment of \$15 billion, while 1,227 companies operating in sectors of industry, finance, real estate, tourism, services, agriculture and telecommunications. The figures were confirmed by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah following a meeting of Kuwait-Egypt higher committee meeting in Kuwait last December.

Egyptian exports to Kuwait between 2010-18 amounted to 984.2 million Kuwaiti Dinars (KD) (some \$3.2 billion), while Kuwait exported KD 165.3 million (\$543 million) worth of products to the North African nation, said Kuwait statistics department. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) is also contributing to development in Egypt, extending loans and grants to development projects in economic, social, agricultural, health and educational sectors. Since its establishment in early 1960s, KFAED financed via loans around 50 projects with some KD one billion (\$3.4 billion), while offering KD 17.3 million (\$56 million) worth of grants and technical assistance. Annual economic and trade transactions between the two country recorded around

KD 3.6 billion (\$12 billion), said Ahmad Al-Dhabe, an economist. He said that the Egyptian community in Kuwait was spending around KD 1.8 billion (\$6 billion) on housing, education, health and travel in Kuwait. Dhabe said around 25,000 Kuwaitis were living in Egypt as well, of them 20,000 students. He added around 165,000 Kuwaitis were visiting Egypt each year, spending around KD 100 million (\$340 million). The two countries, he said, were working on further improving business and investment environments with the main aim of luring further investments.

Several accords set to be signed

Strong relations
Kuwait's Ambassador to Egypt Mohammad Al-Thuwaikh said that the upcoming visit by the Prime Minister of Kuwait will further boost the strong relations with Egypt. The Ambassador expressed confidence that Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's visit will help further reinvigorate Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations. Ambassador Thuwaikh affirmed the frequency of high-level state visits by top officials from both countries reflected the strong brotherly relations between Kuwait and Egypt. The two nations shared a strong history espe-

cially during the 1967 and the 1973 wars against Israel when Kuwaiti and Egyptian troops stood side by side to defend Arab and Muslim integrity, said the Kuwaiti diplomat who also commended Egypt's strong stance against Iraqi greed in Kuwaiti land especially during the August 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The Egyptian Army also played an integral role in liberating Kuwait in 1991 from the Iraqi invasion, he said, affirming that both nations appreciated and valued their strategic partnership and mutual interest in developing relations. Ambassador Thuwaikh encouraged both Kuwaiti and Egyptian investors to seek business opportunities offered by the respective countries, saying that the upcoming two-day visit by Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak will surely focus on this important issue.

In reaction to the upcoming visit, Egyptian strategists, economist, and academics welcomed the upcoming visit by Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, saying that it will thrive bilateral relations. In various statements to KUNA, strategists said that the Arab world was in need for more countries to collaborate and cooperate on matters pertaining to the overall development of Arab citizens and their protection from harm. The visit comes at a crucial time for the Arab world in which countries, such as Kuwait, Egypt and the rest of Arab region, were in need for bolstering ties on all possible levels. The strategists affirmed that Kuwait, in recent history, has been keen on the development of Egypt especially during recent conferences aimed



His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah

at boosting Egyptian economy.

Focusing on economic cooperation, a number of economists and academics said that the upcoming visit by Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak was another step to boost cooperation within the economic, tourism, and commercial domains. They affirmed that Egyptian investors and business personnel were willing to share their business opportunities with their Kuwaiti brethren during Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's visit. Egypt had implemented several steps to attract and encourage business opportunities with various countries especially Kuwait and this will be the main focus of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak's visit to the country, they indicated. — KUNA

Kuwait-Egypt ties role model for others

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait and Egypt have been bonded with relations dating back to middle of the 19th century, when the two countries established trade ties. Kuwait and Egypt are cooperating in political, economic, military, cultural, media, educational, judicial, technical, tourism, health and agricultural domains. There is high hope that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's scheduled visit to Egypt, due today, will help advance relations and cooperation to new levels. Abdulaziz Hussain presented his credentials to then President Jamal Abdulnasser on December 20, 1961, as Kuwait's first Ambassador to Egypt. On March 19, 1962, Mohammad Mahmoud Abdulaziz presented his credentials to late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah as Egypt's first Ambassador to Kuwait.

Bilateral relations further solidified when Kuwait stood by Egypt against the June 1967 aggression and the October

1973 war. Late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah visited Egypt three times in 1964 for two Arab summits and another summit for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Egypt stood behind Kuwait during Iraq's August 1990 invasion of the North Arab Gulf State, and former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was among the first Arab leaders to visit Kuwait following the 1991 liberation. Late Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also visited Cairo and Alexandria in a sign of appreciation to Egypt's support. His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also contributed to strengthening of ties to different levels since assuming office in 2006. Former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak visited Kuwait in 2009 to participate in the Arab Economic and Social Summit.

Educational cooperation is dated back to February 1939 when Kuwait sent citizens to receive education at Al-Azhar University. Egypt sent four teachers to Kuwait in early 1942. Kuwait started sending male students to continue their education in Egypt starting 1952, and female students in 1956. The two countries are certainly bound to historic relations and this was manifested in Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's visit to Kuwait in August 2019. — KUNA

Kuwait reiterates support to Sudan's unity, sovereignty

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait renewed its unequivocal stance towards supporting the unity and sovereignty of Sudan. Delivering a statement to the UNSC meeting on the situation in Darfur, Kuwaiti Permanent Representative to the UN headquarters in New York Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi said late Thursday that paramount support was required to address the current conditions in Sudan, indicating that a good first step would be to lift all sanctions and to remove Khartoum from the list of State sponsors of terrorism. "This new Sudan needs our support," Ambassador Otaibi reiterated, adding

that Kuwait — alongside members of the UNSC and others — were willing to provide a helping hand to Sudan. He emphasized that UNAMID's new mandate must be clear and concise while confirming "it will definitely exit." In addition, the mandate must be precise in specifying various areas of the Mission's work and fully respect the principle of national ownership. "The Juba dialogue brings a new opportunity for durable peace," he noted, stressing that the Mission's drawdown must reflect those changes. He went on to express support for continued United Nations aid even after UNAMID's exit. — KUNA



Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi



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